

GOOD STORIES
FOR THE FAMILY CIRCLE
AND
THE LEISURE HOUR

SELECTED AND EDITED BY

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P R E F A C E .

THE stories in this book have all appeared in the last four volumes of the LUCKNOW WITNESS. They are the fruit of a wide range of reading extended through many years, and have been selected from a great number of papers, periodicals, and books published in America and England. Due credit has been given, wherever possible, both to the writer and the journal in which his production originally appeared.

It is believed that all these stories are *good ones*, both in the sense of being well told and also in that they are adapted to do good to the reader. They present, in an attractive and impressive form, the most important moral and religious lessons. This form of the parable or allegory was the one which the Saviour himself chose as best adapted to carry home the truth to the hearts of the careless, and to produce lasting effects upon the minds of the unthoughtful. Its excellence and appropriateness are confined to no country or age. Men everywhere delight in the portrayal of human nature, in animated dialogue, in scenes drawn from real life. They would much rather listen to spirited conversation or a friendly discussion than read the ablest treatises or the most learned essays. Incident, anecdote, lively narrative—these will be perused by multitudes who would not look at a sermon, and yet the substance of many sermons may be contained in them. They

produce the same effect as the immediate testimony of an eye witness, which is always better, more vivid, more graphic, than a second-hand recital. Indeed, it may be said, they enable us to see for ourselves, with our own eyes, and hear with our own ears, what otherwise would seem to be far away and would have little influence upon us.

This book, while containing much that will be of interest and profit to all ages, is especially adapted to the young. The persons that appear in it are such as they cannot associate with without gaining immediate and permanent benefit. If they would read and re-read these stories until the principal people that figure in them stand out distinctly in their minds like those they meet day by day, they would have around them a select company of the best of the earth, whose example would be an unfailing incentive to right tempers and noble deeds. No parent, or teacher, or friend, can do a young man or young woman better service than by putting this book into his or her hand.

The editor has been much gratified with the fact that twelve hundred copies of this book have been subscribed for by the Anglo-Indian public in advance of its publication. Should it, when issued, continue to meet that reception it has thus far had and which is confidently expected, it is proposed to send forth, after a suitable interval, a second volume every way equal to the present.

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JAMES MUDGE.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
"ON A CANDLESTICK,"	1
SUNDAY EVENING ENTERTAINMENT,	10
THE DOOR IN THE HEART,	12
"IF YOU LOVE ME, LEAN HARD."	18
WINNING BY GUILT,	18
FOR CHARLIE'S SAKE,	21
THE LOGIC OF A HOLY LIFE,	22
ONLY A FLOWER TO GIVE,	23
MAGGIE'S WAY OF HELPING,	24
AN OBJECTOR ANSWERED,	27
THE WIFE'S MISTAKE,	28
OPEN HEARTS AND READY HANDS,	33
A LESSON FOR PULPIT OR PEW,	35
SHUTTING DOORS,	42
THE SAFE PILOT,	44
AN ALLEGORY,	45
A PLEASING INCIDENT,	46
CHURCH WORK <i>versus</i> HOME DUTIES,	48
SAYING "PLEASE,"	50

	PAGE.
BESSIE KENDRICK'S JOURNEY,	52
A YOUNG LADY'S INFLUENCE,	55
WHAT WILL YOU SAY ?	56
A TOUCHING INCIDENT,	57
" LETTING HER OUT A LITTLE,"	59
" FOR NOTHING,"	60
AN UNFORTUNATE SATURDAY,	67
THE THREE SIEVES,	69
FAMILY WORSHIP AT MR. LYMAN'S,	70
WHAT THEN ?	75
A'S OPINION OF B,	76
SAVED BY OLD "CORONATION,"	78
HOW TO WIN BOYS,	83
RELIGION TESTED,	85
PERSEVERANCE REWARDED,	88
THE "DEVIL,"	90
PLAYING WITH SUNBEAMS,	92
STORY OF FIFTY-TWO PRAYER MEETINGS,	100
FOR OUR SAVIOUR'S SAKE,	104
WHY DON'T YOU SMOKE ?	106
A STORY FOR OLD AND YOUNG,	110
THE HIGHLAND KITCHEN MAID,	112
KITTY'S REBELLION—A TRUE TALE,	116
RABBI AKIBA,	122
CHRISTIAN COURTESY,	124

CONTENTS.

vii
PAGE.

LITTLE MABEL,	125
FALLING OUT OF DANGER,	126
MR. POORMAN'S WELL,	129
LOOKING UP,	131
THE DESERT ISLAND,	132
MOTHER ANITA,	137
GOING TO HEAVEN BY RAILROAD,	145
THE INVALID,	148
DID AUNT BAGLEY KNOW?	151
POOR JACK,	159
WORK! WORK! WORK!	163
HOW THE FATHER'S BLESSING CAME,	171
ANNA WILSON'S WRITTEN PRAYER,	174
THE HEAVY LOAD,	178
THE HAPPY SHEPHERD,	181
HIS WORD IS AT STAKE,	185
AN ALLEGORY,	186
YOU CANNOT PASS THIS WAY AGAIN,	192
"THANKSGIVING ANN,"	193
"CHEER HIM! CHEER HIM!"	203
INTQ THE SUNSHINE,	203
A TALK ON THE BOAT,	206
A TENDER-HEARTED SPORTSMAN,	211
IS WINE A BLESSING?	212
"NOT LOST BUT GONE BEFORE,"	214
DIFFERENT KINDS OF GIVERS,	220

	PAGE.
LAW, MIRACLE, AND PRAYER,	221
MAKE SOME ONE HAPPY,	229
SITTING DOWN,	230
THE FENCE STORY,	234
A BAD FIRE,	235
LITTLE HANNAH'S PRAYER HEARD,	236
THE UNANSWERABLE ARGUMENT,	240
A GENEROUS DEED,	242
THE BIBLE READING ENGINEER,	244
LEGEND OF ST. CHRISTOPHER,	247
LOVE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE,	250
"IT'S ALL RIGHT,"	251
THE AMBITIOUS YOUTH,	252
THE DERWESH AND THE CAVILLER,	257
THE HEART'S DESIRE,	258
SUGGESTIVE ILLUSTRATION,	262
SUGGESTIVE TO FAULT-FINDERS,	263
HOW THE MINISTER WAS CURED,	264
LITTLE PIETY,	265
JOE BLACK,	268
DEACON BARNES' SUNDAY,	270
FOLDED HANDS,	272
FINDING A GIRL IN THE BIBLE,	277
MOTHER'S WAY,	278
FORSAKEN FOR A MOMENT,	284
HAPPY NANCY'S SECRET,	289

That same day saw Mrs. Vicars on her way to the house named in the letter. The door was opened by the very woman, and Mrs. Vicars at once boldly stated the errand on which she had come. "I have no time to hear about such things," the woman answered roughly, "religion is all very well for you gentlefolk, but poor folk can't afford it; one must live." "And we must die," Mrs. Vicars said solemnly. "Well, that's true, and I know all about that," said the woman with an odd boastfulness. "I am not so ignorant as some; I wasn't always like what you see me now; why up there," she added, pointing to a top shelf, "I have got a beautiful large Bible I bought with my own money—years ago it is now."

"A beautiful large Bible!" exclaimed Mrs. Vicars; "how I should like to see it; do you think you could get it down for me." "Well ma'am, I'll try, but I'm afraid it will nigh smother you with dust; for it is right on the top-shelf, where I can't get at it with the duster."

So, with the combined help of a table and a chair, she managed to get the Bible down. Alas! the dust stood so thick on it, that in Whitfield's strong words, she would have had no difficulty in writing damnation with her own finger on the whitened cover. But, wiping it carefully with the corner of her apron, she laid it triumphantly on the table before Mrs. Vicars.

"Well, that is a beauty!" exclaimed Mrs. Vicars, "and what a beautiful print too! can you read it?"

"Read it, I should think I can, indeed; at least I can when I have got my glasses, but unluckily I happened of an accident with one of them."

"Can you find them? for if you will give them to me, I will get them mended for you."

"Well, I can't say as how I know exactly where they are, but I think I can lay my hand on them somewhere," she said, proceeding to rumage in several drawers.

Mrs. Vicars joined in the hunt, and during the search for the glasses the ice seemed to melt, and they got quite friendly.

"Here they are," exclaimed Mrs. A., producing them at last, from among a heap of odds and ends.

"And a capital pair of glasses, too," rejoined Mrs. Vicars, "this one is cracked, and we must have a new glass for that eye. but the other is all right; just try it," she added, opening the Bible.

So putting the odd glass to her right eye, the woman read a few words.

"You do read well! why, you are quite a scholar;" and so Mrs. Vicars kept on turning over the pages, and getting her to read one verse after another, till she found the passage she wanted, *viz.*, Isa. i. 18.

"There is nothing amiss with that glass, is there? Read this."

Slowly she read the solemn words through the one old spectacle-glass; but, as she read, Mrs. Vicars felt one great warm drop after another falling upon her hand, which rested on the open Bible. "'Come, let us reason together;' your father loves you; He is knocking at the door of your heart now; 'Come,' he says, 'let us reason together,' Oh! why will you perish, when He says, through me, 'Come to Me, and though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow?'"

She did not say much more, but left, taking the glasses with her. As soon as they were mended, she returned to the house with them. The moment the woman saw her, she exclaimed, holding up both her hands, "I've done with it! I've done with it! Night nor day I have never been able to get the verse out of my head. Not another day of this dreadful life will I lead, if I can help it."

* * * * *

Mrs. A. is now living with her brother, conducting a small business, having been known for many years as a respectable woman and a most earnest Christian.—*Work among the Lost.*

FOR CHARLIE'S SAKE.

THE office-door opened softly, and a stranger in poor, soiled soldier clothes walked in. The man who sat at the desk was a lawyer—a judge—and he was very busy over the papers of a pending suit. It was in the days of the civil war.

The stranger had borne his share of the suffering that was in the land. He had been wounded in battle: and weak and emaciated, he was on his way back to his native State and town. But the busy Judge scarcely raised his eyes to look at him. The poor soldier had taken off his cap, and stood feeling confusedly, in his pockets.

“I have—*did* have—a letter for you, sir.”

The Judge took no notice of the timid, hesitating words. He was very busy, and he was conscious only of a feeling of annoyance that a stranger should break in upon his time.

The confused, nervous search in the pockets continued, and the Judge grew still more annoyed. He was a humane man: but he had responded to so many soldiers' applications already—and he was *very* busy just now. The stranger came nearer and reached out a thin hand. A letter, grimy and pocket-worn, lay on the desk, addressed to the Judge.

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"I have no time to attend to each"—but the impatient sentence was checked on the good man's lips. The hand-writing on the letter was the hand-writing of his son. He opened the letter and read :

"*Dear Father*—The bearer of this is a soldier discharged from the hospital. He is going home to die. Assist him in any way you can, for Charlie's sake."

And then Judge A.—forgot how very busy he was. His heart went out toward the poor sick soldier, and "for Charlie's sake," his own soldier boy far away, he loaded him with gifts, and acts of kindness, and lodged him till he could send him on his way rejoicing.

God's hands are full of work. His mind is busy with the cares of the universe. But no request can fail to win his attention, that is made "for Christ's sake," his own beloved Son.—*S. S. Times.*

THE LOGIC OF A HOLY LIFE.

SOME years ago, a young man who gave clear evidence that he was truly a subject of the regenerating grace of God, was asked what had led to the change in him, as he had been wild and thoughtless. Was it any sermon or book that had impressed him? He promptly answered "No?" "What was it, then? Did any one speak to you specially on the subject of religion?" The same response was given. "Will you then state what first led you to think of your soul's eternal welfare?" The reply was, "I live in the same boarding-house and eat at the same table with J. Y." "Well, did he ever talk with you about your soul?" "No, never, till I sought an inter-

view with him," was the reply. "But," he continued, "there was a sweetness in his disposition, a heavenly mindedness, a holy aroma about his whole life and demeanor, that made one feel that he had a source of comfort, and peace, and happiness, to which I was a stranger. There was a daily beauty in his life that made mine ugly. I became more and more dissatisfied with myself every time I saw him; and though, as I said, he never spoke to me on the subject of personal religion till I myself sought the interview, yet his whole life was a constant sermon to me. He was 'a living epistle,' speaking by actions so clearly that I could resist no longer; and accordingly I went and sought an interview with him. We held repeated conversations with each other. Then he pointed me to Jesus Christ, prayed with me, counseled me, watched over me."

ONLY A FLOWER TO GIVE.

"**M**OTHER," asked little Phoebe Cary, "have you nothing I can carry to poor Aunt Molly?"

Phoebe's mother was poor, and her cupboard was empty that morning.

"I wish I had, Phoebe," said she. "Can you think of any thing?"

Phoebe thought a moment, and then said, "I've only a flower. I will take her a sweet pea."

Now, Phoebe had a sweet pea which she had planted under the window, and as it grew and flowered both mother and daughter loved and enjoyed it. Phoebe picked a fine blossom, and ran down the lane to poor Aunt Molly's

cottage. This was a poor old sick woman, who for a whole year had lain on her bed, suffering great pain.

In the afternoon a lady called to see Aunt Molly, and noticed the sweet pea in a cracked tumbler near the poor woman's bed.

"That pretty posy," said Aunt Molly, looking up with a grateful smile, "was brought to me this morning by a little girl who said it was all she had to bring. I am sure it is worth a great deal to know I'm thought of; and as I look at it, it brings up the image of green fields and the posies I used to pick when I was young; yes, and it makes me think what a wonderful God we have! If this little flower is not beneath his making and his care, he won't overlook a poor creature like me."

Tears came into the lady's eyes. And what did she think? She thought, "If you have only a flower to give, give that, and remember, too, the Saviour's words, that even a cup of cold water given in a Christian spirit, shall not lose its reward."

It is worth a great deal to the poor, the aged, and the sick, to know that they are thought of.

MAGGIE'S WAY OF HELPING.

"Mother, let me help you, please," said Maggie, as she came into the kitchen where Mrs. Curtis was making pies. "Let me make a pie for father's dinner, won't you?"—and the eager eyes fairly sparkled with longing.

"No, Maggie, I've not time to be bothered this morning" was the answer, which threw cold water on the child's expectations.

"Cannot I sift the flour, or pick the fruit, or beat the eggs, or do a single thing to help you, mother?"

Mrs. Curtis shook her head. "I am hurrying to get done, Maggie," she said, "for I want to finish your pink lawn dress to-day, and I have to go over to your Aunt Carrie's, for Bennie has burned his hand badly. You are really in my way, daughter. Don't fidget there by the table any longer."

"I wish," said Maggie, with large eyes, looking as though tears were not far away, "that real mothers were like the mothers in books. All the girls who belonged to the Cooking Club had splendid times, for their mothers entered into things so. But no matter how much I want to help you, you will never let me."

"Are you in earnest in these offers of help, Maggie?"

"Yes, ma, of course I am."

"Well, then, go to the sitting-room, and look carefully over the carpet, breadth by breadth. Pick up every pin and needle and bit of fluff or cotton that you see. Then take the feather duster and the cloth and dust everything thoroughly. Afterwards throw away all the faded flowers, and put fresh ones into the saucers and vases. If you are willing to do that, you will give me real help and save me a good half-hour's work."

Maggie debated silently with herself. The truth was that she had no very anxious desire to do homely, commonplace duty with which she was familiar. She wanted to get her hands into the flour, and to indulge in what looked so delightful and new—the rolling, kneading, cutting, and snipping of the crisp paste. Still she was a good little girl, and she was trying to live after the pattern set by One who pleased not himself. After a moment or two of thought, she made a great effort, and said, pleasantly, "Well, mother, I'll help you *that* way, then."

"And to reward you, dear," said the mother, "next Saturday I'll let you help me *this way*."

Whatever Maggie Curtis did was faithfully done. She was one of those girls whose copy-books show a steady improvement from the first page to the last, and whose exercises are models of neat ruling and penmanship. Before she finished the sitting-room it was like a picture, in its perfect cleanliness and good order. She took a damp cloth and a dry one, in turn, and polished all the glasses over the pictures, and the large oval mirror. She dusted every book and all the pretty trifles on the *etagere*, and then, having completed her task, she darkened the room, so that not a fly would be attracted to stay there.

"What else can I do?" she wondered. She peeped into the kitchen. Her mother's baking was nearly done. Three golden-brown pies and a fragrant cake, and four great loaves set on their sides to cool, were standing on the table. Mrs. Curtis was wearily completing the worst part of her work; the washing and wiping of her dishes, pastry-board, bowls and spoons.

"I'll set them away for her," said Maggie. So the busy, strong little hands willingly lifted, and the tireless little feet willingly stepped back and forth, from closet to table, from kitchen to dining-room till Mrs. Curtis sat down with a sigh of relief.

"What a comfort it is that you are a girl, Maggie," she said. "Now poor Aunt Carrie is always in trouble with that Bennie. When I heard of his burn I said, 'There, it's only what I expected.'"

"It is nice to be a girl," said Maggie; "I think so myself."—*Christian at work.*

AN OBJECTOR ANSWERED.

“ I don’t like so much talk about religion,” said a rude stranger in a city boarding-house, to a lady opposite, who had been answering some questions with regard to a sermon to which she had been listening. “ I don’t like it. It’s something that nobody likes. It’s opposed to every thing pleasant in the world. It ties a man up, hand and foot. It takes away his liberty, and it isn’t natural.”

“ Oh no !” answered the lady, “ it isn’t natural. We have the best of authority for saying so. ‘ The *natural* man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them for they are *spiritually discerned*.’ True religion is rowing up stream, it is sailing against wind and tide.”

A pause for a few moments followed ; then the stranger began again. “ People who speak and think so much about religion are queer, any how. I wish they could only know how people speak and think about them : nobody likes them, for they are like nobody, they are so very peculiar.”

“ Allow me to interrupt you again, sir,” said the lady ; “ but I am so impressed with the manner in which your language accords with Bible language, that I shall have to introduce another quotation from that blessed book. ‘ Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a *peculiar* people.’ ”

“ Does the Bible say they are peculiar, then ? That’s odd. That book, somehow, has got a dose for everybody. Yet, ma’am, you must allow that the commands that book lays on us poor sinners are hard. It’s thou shalt not, and

thou shalt not, all the time. Why, its precepts and views of things are not only systematic tyranny, but they are narrow, very narrow."

"Yes," replied the lady, "they are narrow, for the Bible says they are. 'Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life.' We have to struggle hard to keep in this narrow way, if we once get in it. It is too narrow for pride, worldliness, selfishness, and sloth. It is too narrow for the service of two masters. It is too narrow for covetousness, envy, and all other evil passions. Hatred can find no place, for so much as the sole of its foot, in the narrow way. Good deeds, kind words, faith, hope, and charity, occupy all the ground, and will continue to hold it to the end."

The stranger listened, surprised and annoyed, and at last arose and left the room, apparently a more thoughtful, if not a better man.—*American Messenger.*



THE WIFE'S MISTAKE.

MR^S. Hopgood prided herself on being the best of housekeepers. She was one of those rapid housewives who pursue an atom of dust as a hunter might pursue a stag. No bold-natured fly ever dared to buzz within her dainty walls. No cat purred upon her hearth-stone. Plants were tabooed because their leaflets would fall. Canary-birds were ruthlessly excluded lest they should scatter seed. Sunshine was regarded as an arch enemy. "It brings flies, and fades the carpets," said Mrs. Hopgood. As for Mr. Hopgood and the children, they lived mostly in the kitchen.

"I can't have the boys' muddy boots tramping over the carpets, and the girls sewing in the parlor," said Mrs. Hopgood.

"As for Hopgood, he don't care where he sits. One place is as good as another where he is concerned."

The Hopgood family also took their meals in the kitchen.

"I've got a dining-room as nice as any-body's" said Mrs. Hopgood, "with a real carved oak side-board, with a marble top, and silver polished till it's better than any looking-glass; but where's the use of turning things all upside down, just for one's own family? Common crockery-ware and good bone-handled knives are just as good for every-day use."

"Mamma," said Elsie Hopgood, a cherry-cheeked girl of sixteen, "I should like to sit in the parlor sometimes. Mrs. Montfort and her daughter use theirs every evening, and it looks so pretty and pleasant there."

"Stuff and nonsense" said Mrs. Hopgood, sharply. "I keep house myself after my own fashion, and I give others leave to do the same."

"But mamma," pleaded Elsie, "I was thinking how I should like to invite all the girls here some evening, and have tea, and afterward some little games. I've been asked out so many times, without ever responding, and I'm really ashamed to go."

"Then you had better stay at home," said Mrs. Hopgood, polishing vigorously away at the stem of her silver card-receiver.

"I think I see myself, with all the young folks in town capering on my Brussels carpet, and cake crumbs, and melted cream daubed over everything."

Elsie made no answer, but her countenance quickly fell.

"I wish mamma was like any one else," she said to herself, the tears obscuring her eyes. "I wish she was like Kate Prickett's mother, who lets her have company every Thursday evening. John Elton wants me to marry him. If I was married, I could have a house of my own, and do just as I pleased."

"Mother," said Mr. Hopgood, a week or two afterward, with a troubled face, "is it true that our Elsie is out walking with John Elton, evening after evening? He is a worthless, dissipated fellow, and no fit associate for any girl."

"Mercy upon us! I don't know," said Mrs. Hopgood, with a perturbed face. "I supposed she was with Kate Prickett or Clara Montfort. I'm a great deal too busy with pickling and housekeeping to run at a giddy girl's heels the whole time. But I'm going to commence cleaning to-morrow, and then I'll warrant I'll give her enough to do to keep her out of mischief."

"Mother," said Isaac Hopgood gravely, "sometimes I think that if we made home a little more attractive to our children—"

"Oh, nonsense!" quickly interrupted his wife. "I suppose you'd like us to have tableaux, like Mrs. Montfort; or a magic lantern, like the little Mickfords. Our children haven't been brought up in that way."

Mr. Hopgood said no more. Mrs. Hopgood was, to use her own expression, "in the thick of the house-cleaning," the next day, with the carpets rolled into heaps, the floors spattered with soapsuds, and her head tied up in a pocket-handkerchief when the door suddenly opened.

"Take care of my pan of soapsuds and soda!" cried she, shrilly. "Oh, it's you, is it, Ally?"

"Yes, mother, it's me," said Alexander, her eldest son, who had just gone into business as junior partner to his

father. "I say, do leave off washing a minute and attend to me! Ryerson's in town—my old chum, you know,—only for one day, and I have asked him to dinner."

"To dinner!" almost screamed Mrs. Hopgood, dropping her brush in her consternation; "Alexander Hopgood, are you crazy! Of course I can't have him to dinner. Just look at the confusion the house is in."

"Oh, he won't mind that, mother. Ryerson is a thoroughly good fellow. Just let him sit down to anything with the rest of us, any—"

"I shall do nothing of the sort, Alexander," said Mrs. Hopgood, severely, compressing her lips. "You know I do not approve of your inviting company at any time, still less at such a period as this. If you have been fool enough to ask him, you may get out of the scrape the best way you can."

"But mother—"

"I don't want any more discussion on the subject," says Mrs. Hopgood, dabbling away with the brush.

Alexander went out slamming the door.

"Well," quoth Alexander Hopgood, to himself, "If I can't ask a friend to my home, there's at least the alternative of inviting him to the hotel. I never did such a thing before, but I don't see how else I can manage."

So Alexander Hopgood entertained Mr. Ryerson at the hotel, and gave an unlimited order for iced champagne and dessert. And the upshot of all was that Alexander Hopgood was brought in at eleven o'clock at night by two of the waiters, hopelessly intoxicated.

"Don't be f-f-fraid, mother," stuttered he, brandishing an empty bottle as he became dimly conscious of her white, scared face bending over him. "Go on with your washing! It's a deal jollier at the hotel than it is at home. Freedom forever! Hooooray!"

"Oh, what shall I do?" sobbed Mrs. Hopgood, when the waiters were once more out of the house and the roll of the cab wheel had died away. "To think—only to think that a son of mine should ever disgrace himself thus!"

"It's your own fault, mother," said Benny, the second son. "You wouldn't let Ally bring his friend here."

"Hold your tongue," sharply retorted Mrs. Hopgood wincing beneath the prick of this home truth. "Call Elsie, I need her help."

"Oh, mother!" piped Fanny the younger girl running down stairs in frantic haste, "Elsie ain't here?"

"Not here?"

"No, mother; she hasn't been to bed at all—and there's a note on her table directed to you."

"Open it, mother," said Isaac Hopgood, huskily.

"This is a sad night for our household. My God! has our home become so distasteful to our children that they fly from it like rats from a falling house?" Elsie's note was short enough. It read:

"DEAR MOTHER; I am tired of living in the kitchen, I have run away with John Elton, and before you see me again I shall have entered upon a new future. ELSIE."

Mrs. Hopgood broke out into wild, hysterical sobbings. Mr. Hopgood read the hurriedly scrawled paper, with a face cold and set like steel.

"Run away with John Elton?" he repeated slowly. "Poor Elsie! then God help her. For he is as great a villain and scoundrel as ever lived; and she has sealed her own doom. Mother! mother! this comes of your housekeeping."

"It wasn't my fault, Isaac," sobbed Mrs. Hopgood, rocking herself backward and forward on a chair into which she had dropped.

"It was your fault," retorted her husband, almost savagely. "You made the very name of home a mockery to your children, and shut your soul inside of a scrubbing-pail; and now you are reaping the bitter harvest."

Of course poor Alexander Hopgood was unable to lift his throbbing head from the pillow the next day, and his mother never left him until afternoon.

When at last she came down stairs, the parlor blinds were thrown wide open, a flood of sunshine streaming in, the table neatly set in the pretty dining-room, and flowers on the table, and new books, games and puzzles scattered around.

Mrs. Hopgood gazed around with a bewildered air. She hardly knew her own home.

"This is the way in which we must live henceforward, mother," said her husband cheerily. "Let in the light and sunshine; teach Ben and Fanny that 'home' is something more than an empty name, and try, in so far as we can, to retrieve the errors of our past life."

Mrs. Hopgood mutely bowed her head.

"I will try, husband," she answered.

OPEN HEARTS AND READY HANDS.

ONE day a teacher said to his class: "Boys, you can all be useful, if you will. If you can not do good by great deeds, you can by little ones."

These boys said nothing; but the teacher saw by their looks that they thought he was mistaken. They did not believe that they could be of any use. So he said:

"You think it is not so; but suppose you just try it for a week."

"How shall we try?" asked one of them.

"Just keep your eyes open, and your hands ready to any thing good that comes in your way this week, and tell me next Sabbath if you have not managed to be useful in some way or other," said the teacher.

"Agreed," said the boys; and so they parted.

The next Sabbath, those boys gathered round their teacher with smiling lips, and eyes so full of light that they fairly twinkled like the stars.

"Ah, boys, I see by your looks that you have something to tell me."

"We have, sir, we have," they said all together. Then each one told his story.

"I," said one, "thought of going to the well for a pail of water every morning, to save my mother trouble and time. She thanked me so much, and was so greatly pleased, that I mean to keep on doing it for her."

"And I," said another boy, "thought of a poor old woman whose eyes were too dim to read. I went to her house every day and read a chapter to her from the Bible. It seemed to give her a great deal of comfort. I can not tell how she thanked me."


A third boy said: "I was walking along the street, wondering what I could do. A gentleman called me, and asked me to hold his horse. I did so. He gave me five cents which I have brought to put into the missionary-box."


"I was walking with my eyes open and my hands ready, as you told us," said the fourth boy, "when I saw a little fellow crying because he had lost some pennies. I found them, and he dried up his tears, and ran off feeling very happy."

A fifth boy said: "I saw my mother was very tired one day. The baby was cross, and mother looked sick and sad. I asked mother to put the baby in my little wagon,

She did so, and I gave him a grand ride round the garden. If you had only heard him crow, and seen him clap his hands, teacher, it would have done you good; and O, how much brighter mother looked when I took the baby in doors again!"—*Rev. Dr. Newton.*

A LESSON FOR PULPIT OR PEW.

 N aged negro, most of whose life had been spent in bondage, but who was now rejoicing in liberty, appeared one day at the study of an eminent minister and introduced himself as "Brother Harkliss Jones, from Sou' Caliny."

The good minister  overed at the thought of another clerical beggar for church money, to be spent, as so much of it usually is, in the traveling expenses of the applicant. "Well, Brother Harkliss," he asked with patient kindness, "what can I do for you?"

"You can *listen to me*, brudder," replied Harkliss, with a princely air.

"I'll do that if you'll be short; but my time is very precious, brother," answered the pastor.

"So is mine, brudder!" exclaimed the visitor with a dignity which almost startled the minister. "You and I's both servants of de King, and His business always 'quires haste.'"

"Yes; and your church wants a little help, I suppose, after the war. Well, I'm glad they sent a sensible man for it."

"No sir. My church is de Church Universal, and dat has got de Mighty One of Jacob for her help, and need'nt

go begging of nobody! I come to *give* and not to *ax* sir."

"Then you've got some money for my church, I suppose," said the minister, smiling.

"No, sir; what I've got to give will come closer home to you than to your church."

"Well, what have you to give me then?"

"A little advice and a heap of comfort. I come up from my old home cause my chil'n and gran'chil'n was bound for to come. I was as near de Lord on de banks of the Great Pedee as I ever 'spect to be up here; and dere was as many souls for to save down dere, as dere is up here. But young folks, you know, is songunery* in dere views, and mighty strob'lous in carryin' 'em out. Dey got a notion, poor things, that every foot o'land up North was sanctified by Mr. Lincoln's spirit, and that the arth yielded like it did afore the cuss⁽¹⁾! on it—without labor or sweat! Dey thought de North was a little heaven whar no man had to say to the neighbor, 'Love ye de Lord,' 'kase dey all loved Him a' ready. I told 'em dere was work and poverty and sin up here, like dere was down home; for I've seen Northern folks plenty in my young days and mighty hard ones dey was too! But my chil'n dey 'phood' at me, and said 'mong demsel's, 'Daddy, he's 'hind de times. If we goes he'll soon foller.' Now dey was right dere, for nex' to de Lord, I loves my chil'n and gran'chil'n. When I see dey was comin' I packed up my bundle and come too. It 'peared like I saw a great shinin' finger in de dark cloud one night pointin' due north. 'Den,' says I, 'dat's my pillar o' fire, and where I'm sent I'll go, and de Lord will have my work all laid out ready for me. So here I be, sir.'"

* Sanguine.

"And you want me to set you to work?"

"Not a bit of it, sir; on de contr'y I want to set *you* to work! Dat's what I'm comed here for dis mornin'."

The cool composure of the sable guest fairly astonished the gentleman used to so much deference and respect; and he asked in a tone of surprise, "What do you mean, brother?"

"Well, I've been to hear you preach two Sundays, and I've made up my mind dat you're off de track! You talks like it was a chance anyhow, whether we saints get to heaven after all. Dere was too many 'ifs' in your sarmons. De Master hadn't no 'ifs' in His preachin'. His gospel is 'Him dat believes *shall* be saved.' 'Him dat comes I *will* in no wise cast out.' 'Come unto Me, you dat is tired and heavy laden, and I *will* give you rest.' 'Dere is no condemnation to dem dat are in Christ Jesus.' 'Whar I am, dare *shall* My people be also.' 'I give eternal life unto as many as My Father give, and *none shall* pluck dem out of My hands.' Isn't dat good gospel, sir?"

"Yes, and I believe every word of it," replied the minister.

"Is dere any chance, think you, for Satan to slip in by a trick and upset de great word of redemption?"

"No."

"Den why don't you tell people so? One sarmon o' your'n was tellin' all 'bout be doubts Satan pushes into de hearts of de Lord's people. Why dat sarmon was mor'n half 'devil,' all through! and anoder was tellin' de saints dat dey must do dis and dat and tother, to get peace and comfort here and heaven up yonder. If you believes dat Christ died, and rose again, and dat kase He lives we shall live also, why don't you comfort God's people wid dese words? Let de devil alone for a while in your preachin' (you'll get 'nuff o' him widout makin' so

much of him), and just preach Christ, Christ, Christ! 'Pears like I don't want to hear nothin' else but just only dat dear name, while I stays here in de flesh. I rises every mornin' in Christ, and I walks and talks wid Him all day. When night come I lies down and sleeps wid Him, like it was my last sleep, and I might wake next mornin' wid Him in glory! I'm black and poor and old to de eyes of de world; but I'm fair and rich and fresh in His sight, kase *I'm in Him*. All dat He has got is mine, and dere ain't a king on arth dat old Harkliss would change places wid. No, no, no!"

"But while you never doubt God's power to save, you sometimes have doubts of your acceptance with Him, haven't you?" asked the minister, who was, by this time, seated meekly taking his lesson.

"No, never: why should I? Dere was a night once, long time ago, when my soul was ⁱⁿceeding sorrowful, like de Master's when He was in de garden. I felt like I was helpless for dis life, and I had no light on de world beyont; I hated my hard massa, and I most hated God too, for not giving me a better lot. I was out in de canebrake all alone, a mile away from any livin' cretur'. I felt like I wanted to kill myself 'kase my massa he done gone and sold my wife and baby! Dat ar night I got a hint in my soul what hell was; and as I sat dere a thought come into me and I spoke it out, 'Dere isn't no God,' says I. And dem words skeart me, so I sprung right off de ground whar I was lyin'! I was bewildered, I reckons: for all of a sudden I see a great white hand sweep back de dark night, and a light shined all 'roun 'bout me. I didn't see nobody, but I felt strong arms 'bout me, and in a minute my poor, achin' head was leanin' on somebody's breast; and oh, what a place dat was to rest on! Den a voice said, 'Come unto Me, poor, tired and heavy-laden soul,

and I will give you rest. Den I knowed dere was a God, and dat it was de voice of His Son in my soul. I've been a new man since dat night; but half de time I been only a common sort of Christian, *like you*, risin' and fallin', hopin' and doubtin'; such a Christian as puzzles de world to know whether dere is any good in 'ligion or not!

"I was a waiter in dem days, and a good deal with de white folks, and it was fash'nable 'mong dem for to doubt, and mourn, and whine, when dey talked 'ligion; and I used to forget dat night in de canebrake, and fell into de fashion of de gran' folks. But it didn't work with me, and I got into darkness. Den I'd try to fight my own way out of de swamp; but de more I tried de faster I stuck. Den I would try to hire de Lord to lift me out of de horrible pit and de miry clay, by good works, helpin' de weak field hands, or givin' away my pocket money. But we never made a bargain—de Lord and me! He always brung me low till I was glad to get peace free! and to take away all chance o' braggin' from me, He generally brought de peace when I was asleep and doin' no good works. Den I would wake wid glory in my soul, and I would run on mighty peart for a spell. I didn't know what Christ was den. He was in me; but dere was else in me besides Him."

"Come here and sit in this large chair, brother; it is more comfortable than that one," said the minister in a subdued voice, as if addressing a superior. "I want to hear how you got clear of the tempter, and filled with Christ at last."

"Oh, oh well, it isn't no great story, but here it is. Dere was an old col'd sister dey used to call Gimsey, a sort of a preacher like 'mong de field hands. Well, when she come down to her death bed, she done call all massa's people and de neighborin' black folks 'round her, 'kase she said she'd been in heaven a whole hour, and come back to

give us a word of comfort. We gathered 'bout her, and she lift her two hands and pray dis way. 'Lor' Jesus, answer dis one pra'er of mine, for dy own name sake. It is old Gimsey's last prayer; de next word with me will be praise and hallelujahs. Bring dese poor chil'n into de light, like You bring me into de light, fifty year ago. Don't let Bruder Harkliss cast contempt no longer on dy blessed name by doubtin' of dy word which is truth! Humble proud Jenny, and in massy* punish drunk Dose, and comfort lone Poly, and cure sick Abe, and bring all the rest to dy feet here, and to dy house up dere by-an'-by!' Den she open her eyes and begun for to preach, and she gave each one a separate little sermon all te hisself. She den call me. 'Come here, Bruder Harkliss, and take my cold hand in yourn.' I went, and she said, 'Oh Harkliss, Harkliss! you's worse den ^{an} onprofitable servant! You's half de time barin' false witness agin de Lord dat bought you, and tellin' de world dat His Word ain't for to be trusted—dat He don't always speak truth!'

" 'No,' says I, 'auntie, I never done dat; I trust Him wid all my heart.'

" 'Mebby you do, right here on the varge of heaven; but quick's you get out you'll say, 'Deres' no tellin whether I'll ever reach heaven or not.' 'Harkliss,' says she, '*do you believe* de Lord has writ yer name on de palms of His hand and His name on your forehead?'

" I bowed down my head in shame, for I see my sin. And den de truth of God shone out like a great sun, as I never see it afore. My soul was full of glory, such like as de world never see, and I says, 'Yes, auntie, He has told me time and again dat He is mine and dat I am His.' 'Do you believe He speak de truth, 'Harkliss?' says she.

* Mercy.

'Yes auntie,' says I, 'I know now he does. I see His word like fire.' 'Den you quit a doubtin' afore de world,' says she. 'Harkliss, if you'd been as disrespectful to your owner as you've been to de great Master, and if you'd gone round saying, he's promised me such and such, but I doubt he'll not keep his word—he'd sold you into de rice swamps a hundred times in dese years! Better cut off yer right hand and pluck out yer right eye dan to doubt de truth of His Word. You is His, for He bought you with His precious blood; and as sure as He's in heaven you shall go dere too! I'm tired, chil'n, and must go to sleep. Good night.'

"Dere, sir, dem was old Gimsey's last words on earth; de next one she spoke was 'Glory' fore de trone.

"Well, dere was a great light all through my soul den, dat has never gave out since. 'Pears like de Lord is in de midst of it, where I can feel His presence, and when de 'ifs' and 'may-bes' comes round to break my peace, I shouts out, no matter who hears me, 'De Lord says dat I am His and dat whar He am, dar shall I be also; and His word endureth forever.' Den de 'ifs' all fly off like they were unclean birds, and leave me in de light! Why, sir, I's got de world so under my feet dat nothin' in it can worry me, only de sin I sees; and dat will be cleared off some day. De Lord's chil'n got a good right to glory; and nobody—not de devil, dat you make such count on—can't take it 'way from 'em! Now my errant's done here. You stick to de gospel—Christ, Christ—and you'll see de glory come down on yer people, soon see them a tramp-lin' on de world. Good bye sir."

The minister rose and took the hand of his guest, kindly saying, "Let me write your name down, brother; for I want to see you again and to know you better. How do you spell Harkliss?"

"Her-c-less—I don't guess I can 'member it, for it's nigh unto forty years since I larnt to spell it from my young massa. He said I was named after one of dem heathen goddishes dat dey use to made believe dey had in old times. He's 'mong dat nonsense dey teaches in college. He's de fellow dat killed lions and monsters and such like with his club. You's been to college, so you must know 'bout him, de strongest goddish of them all—Harkliss."

"I know him," replied the minister. "Well, brother Hercules, come and see me again very soon. Good bye."

When the old negro had closed the door behind him, the minister read over the few pages he had already written of his next Sunday's sermon. It was cold and lifeless—there was no Christ in it. He tore the sheets into atoms, and sat down before the fire to meditate on the words of the poor visitor. He never thought so little of himself before. Taking up his hat, he went out to visit some of the hidden ones of his flock whom he knew to be great in the kingdom of heaven.—*By* MRS. JAMES D. CHAPLIN.

SHUTTING DOORS.

"**D**ON'T look so cross, Edward, when I call you back to shut the doors. Grandpa's old bones feel the March wind, and, besides, you have got to spend your life shutting doors, and might as well begin to learn now."

"Do forgive me, gran'pa. I ought to be ashamed to be cross to you. But what do you mean? I ain't going to be a sexton. I am going to college, and then I am going to be a lawyer."

"Well, admitting all that, I imagine Squire Edward C——will have a good many doors to shut, if he ever makes much of a man."

"What doors? Do tell me, gran'pa."

"Sit down a minute, and I will give you a list:—

"In the first place, the door of your ears must be closed against the bad language and evil counsel of the boys and young men you will meet at school and college, or you will be undone. Let them once get possession of that door, and I would not give much for Edward C——'s future prospects.

"The doors of your eyes, too, must be shut against bad books, idle novels, and low, wicked newspapers, or your studies will be neglected, and you will grow up a useless, ignorant man. You will have to close them sometimes against the fine things exposed for sale in the store windows, or you will never learn to lay up money, or have any left to give away.

"The door of your lips will need especial care, for they guard an unruly member, which makes great use of the bad company let in at the doors of the eyes and ears. This door is very apt to blow open, and if not constantly watched, will let out angry, trifling, or vulgar words. It will backbite sometimes worse than a March wind, if it is left open too long. I would advise you to keep it shut much of the time, till you have laid up a store of knowledge, or at least till you have something valuable to say.

"The inner door of your heart must be shut against temptation, for conscience, the door-keeper, grows very indifferent if you disregard his call, and sometimes drops asleep at his post; and when you may think you are doing very well, you are fast going down to ruin.

"If you carefully guard the outside doors of the eyes and ears and lips, you will keep out many cold blasts of sin, which get in before you think.

“This ‘shutting doors,’ you see, Eddy, will be a serious business, one on which your well-doing in this life and the next depends.”—*Church Union*.

THE SAFE PILOT.



SHIP was coming into port with a valuable cargo of merchandise on board, and still more valuable freight of precious lives. When nearing the destined port a heavy storm arose. There was no hope for the ship unless she could reach the harbor before the heaviest fury of the storm fell upon her. But, alas! her pilot was an incompetent one: he did not know the waters through which he professed to guide her. The peril was seen from the shore, and quickly a pilot boat, with a few resolute men on board, set out through the furious sea to come to the crew's rescue. Soon a new pilot was on deck, the old one displaced, and the men assigned to their various posts. The captain took the wheel, and followed implicitly the directions of the new leader.

The ship was headed directly towards the foaming breakers.


“Shall I put about?” cried the captain. “Steady,” was the calm reply; and in a moment more came the order, “About ship!” The ship sailed steadily through a narrow pass between two sunken rocks, and soon all danger was over, and the vessel safely anchored in the harbor.

O, what a crowding about that noble pilot who had risked his life to come to them; who had guided them so steadily and safely through the storm and the breakers! The captain left the wheel and threw his arms about him

in the transport of emotion. The passengers and crew were all eager to grasp his hand, and testify by words and gifts their gratitude to one who had saved them from death.

Do you not think that in the last day there will be such a gathering about the great Pilot of souls, who has brought His chosen ones safe into the heavenly harbor? Do you suppose they can ever forget that He not only risked, but gave His life to rescue them? We must begin this song of loving gratitude on earth, if we would share in the joy of Christ's ransomed ones in heaven.

AN ALLEGORY.

 ONCE or twice a little leaf was heard to cry and sigh, as leaves often do when a gentle wind is about. And the twig said, "what is the matter, little leaf?"

"The wind," said the leaf, "just told me that one day it would pull me off and throw me on the ground to die."

The twig told it to the branch, and the branch told it to the tree.

And when the tree heard it, it rustled all over and sent back word to the leaf, "Do not be afraid, hold on tightly, and you shall not go off till you want to."

And so the leaf stopped sighing, and went on singing and rustling. And so it grew all summer long till October. And when the bright days of autumn came, the leaf saw all the leaves around becoming very beautiful. Some were yellow, and some were striped with colors. Then it asked the tree what it meant? And the tree said, "All these leaves are getting ready to fly away, and they have put on these colors because of their joy."

Then the little leaf began to want to go, and grew very beautiful in thinking of it. And when it was gay in colors

it saw that the branches of the tree had no colors in them, and so the leaf said, "O branch! why are you lead-colored and we golden?"

"We must keep on our work clothes," said the tree, "for our work is not yet done; but your clothes are for a holiday, because your task is over."

Just then a little puff of wind came, and the leaf let go without thinking of it, and the wind took it up and turned it over and then let it fall gently down under the edge of a fence, among hundreds of leaves, and it never waked up to tell us what it dreamed about.—*Exchange*.

A PLEASING INCIDENT.

SITTING in a station the other day, I had a little sermon preached in the way I like; and I'll report it for your benefit, because it taught one of the lessons which we all should learn, and taught it in such a natural, simple way, that no one could forget it. It was a bleak, snowy day; the train was late; the ladies'-room dark and smoky; and the dozen women, old and young, who sat waiting impatiently, all looked cross, low-spirited, or stupid. I felt all three; and thought, as I looked around, that my fellow-beings were a very unamiable, uninteresting set.

Just then a forlorn old woman, shaking with palsy, came in with a basket of wares for sale, and went about mutely offering them to the sitters. Nobody bought anything, and the poor old soul stood blinking at the door a minute, as if reluctant to go out into the bitter storm again. She turned presently, and poked about the room as if trying to find something; and then a pale lady in

heavy. So after enduring the trouble as long as she was able, all alone by herself—for she was a widow—she had come to Dr. Eastwick, on the Monday morning after what has already been told, to tell her story and get his advice. The story was long, and I cannot recite it here, but give a few words to show its purport.

"It will be a loss to me, doctor," Mrs. Plumtree said, with tears in her eyes, "to take the boy away. Mr. Clayton is very good to him, and has raised his salary, so that now he's really a help—and places are so scarce, doctor."

"What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" the doctor asked, almost abstractedly.

"That's just what I say, doctor: and if he stays there I'm sure he'll be ruined. He always used to be so frank and tender-hearted, and never a thing did he do wrong but he'd come right afterwards and tell me. But now, doctor, he never tells a thing; he's restless and fidgety; he don't want to be alone with me; and the other night, doctor, when I went to kiss him"—and here Mrs. Plumtree burst into a flood of tears—"I knew he'd been drinking."

There was a moment's silence, in which the good woman regained her composure.

"He's a good boy, doctor," she went on; "but he hasn't any back-bone, and he needs some one with him all the time to put it in. If there was only one boy in the office he could lean on, he'd get along, but there isn't, doctor—not a single one," and she shook her head mournfully over the prospect.

"Isn't young Bleecker there, Mrs. Plumtree?"

"I guess he isn't any better than the rest of them, doctor."

The doctor's face fell.

"And he could do so much good," he said, sadly.

"Oh, well, doctor," returned the woman, "those as can do the most good don't always do it."

"We can all do something, Mrs. Plumtree." To which proposition Mrs. Plumtree readily assented; whereupon the good old gentleman diverged into some excellent counsel which it is not necessary to reproduce here.

Now, if Mrs. Plumtree in that hour of her anxiety could have looked in at Clayton & Co.'s office in Wall Street, she would indeed have found just cause for all her apprehensions.

It was a leisure interval in the business of the day. Stocks were neither coming in nor going out, money for the time was inactive, and a knot of young fellows were gathered idly around one of the desks, having no occupation but to chaff one another. There were Jack Wendover, Joe Simpson, Harry Sheridan, Remsen Cronyn, Tom Parke, Allan Bleeker, Murray Rutgers and Willie Plumtree.

I can't undertake to describe them—the limits of this paper won't allow it—except to say that whereas all the others had a fair share of manly growth and vigor, the last was a fair, delicate boy of sixteen, who seemed hardly fitted to deal with the world or to mix with men. I don't believe he was intentionally weak, but one could see in his frail form and timid manner the physical lack of moral strength which his mother had described as an absence of back-bone.

They were running each other with a ready play of wit which was often neither delicate nor charitable, and was quite as often widely at variance with truth. Of this attack each one came in for a liberal share, and Allan suffered with the rest.

"Say, Cronyn!" called out Tom Parke across the circle.

"Well?" responded the other indifferently.

"Did you ever know our friend Bleeker was fond of his wine?"

"Had my suspicions," returned Cronyn; "these proper fellows will take it on the sly."

Tom nodded acquiescence, and Allan, without speaking, awaited further developments.

"Know Jim Ward, don't you, Cronyn?"

Cronyn signified that he did.

"Says he met Allan at Ten Eyck's the other night. Ten Eyck had some of his rare old port out. Jim took half a glass, and says it made his head buzz. Says he saw Bleecker drink three glasses and take two small bottles afterwards."

"To be sure!" chimed in Murray Rutgers; "don't you remember, Allan, that time you and I had the champagne supper at the Brunswick?—Beg pardon, though, my dear fellow—I don't suppose you do remember; I forgot what a state your head was in that night."

"Never mind," put in Sheridan forgivingly, "never mind, Allan; it's what we all do—only you ought to do it aboveboard."

But Jack Wendover's face took a judicial look, and Willie Plumtree's large eyes expanded to an alarming extent.

"I'm disappointed in you, Allan," said Jack sadly, shaking his head; "and yet it's only the 'dear gazelle' business over again. Can't you draw up a pledge, fellows—make it very strong? I think," he added musingly, "that you ought to prohibit soda water; it's certainly a mild form of stimulant—on a hot day. Here's little Plumtree, too. By all means count him in."

"Let Billy alone, Jack," said Simpson; "he's getting educated. He'll be a man yet one of these days—won't you, Billy?"

But the boy shrank away from the rough blow that accompanied the words, and looked still anxiously at Allan, on whose face the blood had been deepening with every syllable, until now it was fairly scarlet.

"By the way," said Parke, "Jim Ward told me a capital story."

"Tell it to us, Tom," eagerly from half a dozen voices.

"It's properly bad," he said, with seeming reluctance.

There was a loud laugh from Simpson.

"That'll suit Bleecker," he said.

But upon Tom's remark Allan had moved away and was now at his desk.

"Allan's mad," observed Rutgers, hesitatingly.

"Troubled about Jim Ward's tales, I guess," said Cronyn.

"Pity he can't bear the truth," put in Parke, and Allan, hearing the remark, turned back and stood again before the group.

"It isn't that" he said hotly. Then, pausing for a moment, while his lips tightened and the blood once more rushed to his face, "I don't mind how much you run me—it isn't true, not a word of it—but I can't stand to hear—" Then he paused again.

"Well?" said Tom sarcastically.

"What you're telling—that's why I'm going off."

"Phew!" ejaculated Tom; and the others set up a chorus of ironical surprise.

"Since when?" inquired Rutgers.

"*Honi soit*"—began Cronyn.

"My dear fellow," asked Tom, "isn't this a new departure?"

"What you're going to tell," continued Allan, still more emphatically, "isn't a fit thing to listen to, and I don't believe in it."

"Ain't you a little fastidious?" inquired Tom, with a curl upon his lip.

"I'm not fond of touching pitch," the boy continued; "and besides"—and here his voice took on a lower tone.

and for an instant his eyes dropped before the bold gaze of his half-dozen opponents—"and besides," he went on, now looking them full in the face, "I'm a member of the church, and a mighty poor one if I stand by and hear God's name profaned, and sacred things reviled and impure things told, without saying a word to prevent it!"

"Don't get in a passion, Allan—that's just as bad," put in Cronyn, satirically.

Allan did not at once reply, and the reasons were obvious, for his lips were quivering and his eyes moist.

"Thank you, Cronyn," he said, quite steadily, at length. "I don't want to be unfair or uncharitable; but I don't think such things are right, and I won't take any part in them."

He waited a moment for some response, then turned slowly and went back to his desk.

"Saint!" he heard some one exclaim as he went by, and then, after a moment, Joe Simpson's voice—

"I'm going out, fellows; any one want to come?"

"I'll go, I guess," and Jack Wendover swung his long legs off the stool.

"Don't you want to come, Bleecker?" asked Cronyn as he too turned away.

"Bring Billy," said Simpson, looking back from the door.

"Hold on!" interposed Allan, springing from his stool, and intercepting the boy's departure. "What are you going to do with Willie?" he demanded, as Simpson came slowly back.

"Give him a liberal education," said Simpson, boldly, laying a hand on the shoulder of the boy, who shrunk back and looked helplessly at Allan.

"Now, Simpson," Allan said, and he tried to say it with due calmness, "if you try to take that boy outside

this office on any such errand, I'll go at that very moment and report you to Mr. Clayton. I'll do it, Simpson, just so sure as that's your name."

The other winced.

"I suppose that's a sample of your Christian spirit," he said.

"That's just it," returned Allan, "to help those who can't help themselves."

"And to tell tales," muttered Simpson.

But the others saw the tide was turned.

"Come ahead, Joe," said Wendover. "You can't do anything with Bleecker;" and realizing the fact, Simpson moved sulkily away.

Just then one of the firm sent Willie out in another direction, and Allan had no chance for a word with the boy as he wished. But later in the afternoon, when the others had gone home and he was still busy over his cash-book, he heard a step at his side, and looking up saw the pale, child-like face looking into his.

"Well, Willie," he said encouragingly.

There were tears in the boy's eyes, and his voice was anything but firm.

"I was glad you said what you did, Mr Bleecker," he began.

Allan flushed a little as he asked,

"Did it help you any, Willie?"

"It made me feel there was some use in trying."

Allan could see how hard it was for the boy to get over his timidity.

"Haven't you tried before, Willie?" he asked.

"Yes, I have, Mr. Bleecker, real hard; but there was'nt anybody to help, and they made me go with them, sir, and I had to give up. I always thought you were better than the rest of them," looking frankly at Allan, "but I

didn't dare say anything to you about it. Then to-day when they were running you, I was so afraid it might perhaps be true," and his gaze seemed to ask further confirmation.

"There wasn't a syllable of it true, Willie," the young man said, emphatically; "only I'm very sorry I've been so neglectful all the while. But if I can help you now with these fellows I'll do it; and, perhaps, Willie, we can both do something to help them," and as Willie leaned confidentially over the desk for some time longer, happier and brighter than he had been for many a week, Allan Bleecker was glad to know that he himself had not that day hid his light altogether under a bushel.

And when Willie had finally gone, Murray Rutgers, who had been meanwhile hovering uneasily around, came up in a hesitating way and said:

"Of course, Bleecker, none of us believed that trash about your drinking."

"I didn't imagine that you did," said Allan, quietly.

"And what you said let the fellows know just where you stood," went on Jack, warmly.

"That's just what I wanted," said Allan, pausing in an interval of calculation.

"And I guess you stand in the right place," emphatically, as he moved away. And then for at least ten minutes, while the column of figures remained untouched, Allan sat thinking over the day's history.

Well, not long afterward, though Allan himself never breathed a word of it, the whole of that history came to Mr. Coleridge's knowledge. For Willie Plumtree, in an agony of shame and remorse and better purpose, told it all to his mother that night, and she carried it the next day with a thankful heart to Doctor Eastwick, and he brought it promptly and gladly to Mr. Coleridge. And

you may imagine with what joy the teacher learned how Allan Bleecker had set his candle on a candlestick, and was giving light to all within the house.—By ELIOT McCORMICK in the *Christian Union*.

SUNDAY EVENING ENTERTAINMENT.

I WAS paying a visit to a friend who seemed to me in many respects a model in the training of children.

But she complained of her want of success in interesting them in suitable Sunday occupations.

It chanced that one Sunday during my stay was so stormy that few could venture out, and by the middle of the afternoon her little flock became very restless, and in despair she applied to me to suggest something that would preserve a reverence for the day.

"Children," said I, "suppose you take your Bibles and letter-paper and pencils into the dining-room, and I will try to entertain you."

As Sunday-school lessons had been duly conned, Peter cried out, "We don't want it unless it's tip-top."

"What must we do first?" asked Murray.

"First of all take seats around the table. Then each of you in turn give the name of *your favorite fruit*, then we will search in the Concordance for some text of Scripture relating to it, and after that we will turn to the Commentary for an explanation of the subject, and talk about it." As Bob is the oldest we will begin with him.

"What fruit do you like best, Bob?" "I know," said Bessie. "Yes, but Bessie, you must answer in turn." "Guess you'd think it was grapes if you had seen the way he went into them out at Uncle Charley's," said Tom. "Well,

Bob, then turn to the fifth chapter of Isaiah, fourth verse, and read it aloud."

"What could I have done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore when I looked for it to bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes," repeated Bob.

"Read what Scott says about that."

"Good purposes are not enough, there must be fruit, that is a good heart and a good life—the vineyard produced wild grapes, that is things that seemed like fruit but were not."

"The prophet Isaiah," said I, "was speaking of the Jews, but what he said applies just as well to us."

"It is not enough to say, Oh, I mean to be good and obey my mother and keep Sunday holy, and learn my lessons and not do these things after all. We must really do them."

"Clara, you are next older, what is your favorite fruit?" "Apples," she replied. "Well, Solomon says in Proverbs 25 : 11, 'a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures (or a net-work) of silver.' Here Solomon shows how important it is to speak properly, to say just the right thing at the time."

"Now, Murray." "Pears," he answered quickly.

"I cannot find any text about pears: but never mind, we will take up flowers next, and you shall lead."

We went on in this manner until the maid came in, to set the tea-table, and then I had to promise to renew the exercise in the evening. It worked so well we concluded to go on with it every Sunday evening.

After fruits and flowers were exhausted, we selected animals, birds, precious stones, etc., and I myself became acquainted with portions of Scripture I never knew before.

THE DOOR IN THE HEART.

"But far away up many a pair of winding stairs in her heart was a door easily passed by, and on that door was written 'WOMAN.'"

"And so it is with the drunkard; far away up many a pair of winding stairs in his heart there is a door easily passed by, and we must knock at that door once, twice, seven times, yea, seventy times seven, to open it."—JOHN B. GOUGH.

HE was an old man. Not so very old, either, for the wrinkles that marked his visage were not the autograph that time's finger had laid there, and the hand that placed upon the low pine table the well-drained glass, did not tremble so with the weakening that age induces; yet very old and very wretched looked the sole occupant of that narrow room, with its red curtain and floor stained with tobacco saliva, and an atmosphere abundantly seasoned by the bar-room into which it opened.

A hat—it must have been intended for one—half concealed the owner's uncombed locks; and unmistakable evidence of a familiar acquaintance with brickbats and the gutter did that same hat produce. Then there was a coat, out of whose sleeves peeped a pair of elbows in rejoicing consciousness that they "could afford to be out." Add to these, reader, a tattered pair of trousers, and you have the picture of the wretched being who had just commenced his daily potations in the only "grog-shop" he was allowed to enter. And yet the wretched, friendless man that sat there, under the stupefying effects of his morning dram, had a heart; and far away up a great many pairs of winding stairs in that heart was a door easily passed by, and on that door, covered with cobwebs of time and neg-

lect, was written, "MAN." But nobody dreamed of this; and when the temperance man had gone to him, and promised him employment and respectability if he would "sign," and others (well-meaning men) had rated him soundly for his evil ways, and he had turned a deaf ear to all these things, and gone back with pertinacity to his "cups," everybody said old Bill Strong's case was a hopeless one. Ah! none of these had patiently groped their way up the heart's winding stairs, and read the inscription on the hidden door there.

But while the unhappy man sat by the pine table that morning, the bar-keeper suddenly entered, followed by a lady with a pale, high brow, mild, hazel eyes, and a strangely winning expression on her mild face. The man looked up with a vacant stare of astonishment, as the bar-keeper tendered the lady a seat, and pointed to the other, saying, "That's Bill Strong, ma'am," and, with a glance that indicated very plainly his wonder at what she could want there, left her alone with the astounded and now thoroughly-sobered man.

The soft eyes of the lady wandered with a sad, pitying expression over old Bill's features, and then, in a low, sweet voice, she asked,

"Am I rightly informed? Do I address Mr. William Strong?"

Ah! with those few words the lady had got farther up the winding stairs and nearer the hidden door than all who had gone before her.

"Yes, that is my name, ma'am," said old Bill, and he glanced down at his shabby attire, and actually tried to hide the elbow that was peeping out. It was a long time since he had been addressed as Mr. William Strong, and somehow it sounded very pleasant to him.

"I am very glad to meet you, Mr. Strong," responded the lady; "I have heard my father speak of you so often, and of the days when you and he were boys together, that I almost feel as if we were old acquaintances. You surely cannot have forgotten Charles Morrison?"

"Oh! no, Charley and I used to be great cronies," said old Bill, with sudden animation, and a light in his eye such as had not shone there for a long time, except when rum gave it a fitful brilliancy.

Ah! the lady did not know, as perhaps the angels did, that she had mounted the stairs and was softly feeling for the unseen door, so she went on:

"I almost feel, Mr. Strong, as if I could see the old spot upon which your homestead stood. I have heard my father describe it so often. The hill with its crown of the old oaks at the back of your house, and the field of yellow harvest grain that waved in front. Then there was the green grass before the front door, with the huge apple-tree that threw its shadows across it; and the old 'portico' with the grape-vine that climbed over it, and the white roses that peeped in at the bedroom window, and the spring that went shining and bubbling through the bed of green mint at the side of the house."

Old Bill moved uneasily in his chair, and the muscles around his mouth twitched occasionally; but unmindful of this, the lady kept on in the same low, melting voice:

" 'Many and many were the hours,' so father would say, 'that Willie and I used to pass under the shadow of that old apple-tree playing at hide and seek, or lolling on the grass and telling each other the great things we meant to do when we became big men, while Willie's blue eyes would sparkle with hope and happiness; and when the sunset laid a crown of gold on the top of the oaks on the hill, Willie's mother might be seen standing in the portico,

with her snowy cap and checked apron, and we would hear her voice calling, Come, boys, come to supper.'"

One after another the big, warm, blessed tears went rolling down old Bill's cheeks, and falling on the pine table. Ah! the lady was at the door then.

" 'I was always at home at Willie's, father would say, 'and used to have my bowl of fresh milk and bread, too; and when these had disappeared, Willie would draw his little stool to his mother's feet and she would tell him some pleasant story of Joseph, or David, or some good boy who afterward became a great man, and then she would part Willie's brown curls from off his forehead, and say in a trembling voice I can never forget, "Promise, me, Willie, when you are a man, and the gray hairs of your mother are resting in the church-yard yonder, you will never disgrace her memory." And Willie would draw up his slight form, lift his blue eyes proudly to his mother and say, "Never fear, mother, I will make a good man, and a great one, too," and then, after we had said our evening prayers, we would go contented and happy as the bird that nestled in the old apple-tree, to rest. Then, just as we were sinking into some pleasant dream, we would hear a well-known footfall on the stairs, and a kind face bending over would inquire if we were nicely tucked up. It is a long, long time,' father would say, 'since I heard from Willie, but I am sure he has never fallen into any evil ways. The words of his mother would keep him from that.'"

Rap! rap! rap! went the words of the lady at the door in old Bill's heart. Creak! creak! creak! went the door on its rusty hinges. The lady could only see the subdued man bury his face in his clasped hands, and while his frame shook like an aspen leaf, she heard him murmur, amid childlike sobs, "My mother, oh! my mother!" With a silent prayer of thankfulness, she resumed:

"But there was one thing my father loved to talk of better than all the rest. It was of the morning you were married, Mr. Strong. 'It was enough to do one's eyes good to look at them,' he would say, 'as they walked up the old church aisle; he with his proud, manly tread, and she, a delicate, fragile creature, fair as the orange blossoms that trembled in her hair. I remember how clear and confident William's voice sounded through the old church, as he promised to love, protect and cherish the bright, confiding creature at his side; and I knew he thought, as he looked down upon her, that the winds of Heaven would never visit her face too roughly;' and then my father would tell us of your pleasant home, and of the bright-eyed boy and the fair-haired girl that came after a while to gladden it; and then you know he removed to another part of the country, Mr. Strong, and lost sight of you."

Once again the lady paused, for the agony of the strong man before her was fearful to behold, and then in a lower tone she thus spoke: "I did not forget the promise I made my father previous to his death, that if ever I visited his native place I would seek out his old friend. But when I inquired for you they unfolded a terrible story to me, Mr. Strong. They told me of a desolate and broken household; of a blue-eyed boy that a father's heart might so well delight in, who had left his home in disgust and despair, for one on the homeless waters; of the gentle, suffering wife who, faithful to the last, went down, with a prayer on her lips for her erring husband, broken-hearted to the grave, and of the fair-haired orphan girl, who followed her mother in a little while. Oh! it is a sad, sad story I have heard of my father's old friend."

"It was I! it was I that did it! I killed them!" cried old Bill, lifting his bowed head, and gazing on the

lady, every feature expressive of such wild agony and helpless remorse, that she shuddered at the despair her own words had caused. (Wide, wide open stood the door then, and the lady passed in.)

A soft hand was laid soothingly upon old Bill's arms and a voice full of hope murmured :

" Even for all this there is mercy. There is a redemption through the atoning merits of Jesus, and you well know your *first step* toward it. Sign the pledge. In the name of the last prayer of your dying wife, and of the child that sleeps by her side, I ask you, as your friend. Will you do it?"

" I will," said old Bill, while he brought down his closed hand with such force on the rickety pine table that it rocked beneath it; and a gleam of hope lighted up his features, as he seized the pen and paper the lady placed before him, which paper contained a declaration, binding all who signed it to abstain from the use of intoxicating beverages; and when he returned it to her—in bold, legible characters there lay written beneath it the name of

WILLIAM STRONG.

There was an expression almost ludicrous, from its intensesness of curiosity, on the bar-keeper's physiognomy, as the lady, after her long interview with old Bill, passed quietly through the shop, and the expression was not lessened when old Bill, a few moments after, walked through without taking another glass of grog; and he never passed over the threshold again.

Earnest-hearted reader, you whose soul may be glowing with sympathy for your erring brother man, who would gladly raise him from the depths of sin and degradation, and point him to the highway of peace and prosperity, remember there is a door in every human breast. See that you pass not by it.—*British Workman.*

"IF YOU LOVE ME, LEAN HARD."

MISS Fiske, while in the Nestorian Mission, was at one time in feeble health, and much depressed in spirits. One hot Sabbath afternoon she sat on her mat on the chapel floor, longing for support and rest, feeling unable to maintain her trying position until the close of worship. Presently she felt a woman's form seated at her back, and heard the whisper, 'Lean on me.' Scarcely yielding to the request, she heard it repeated, 'Lean on me.' Then she divided her weight with the gentle pleader, but that did not suffice. In earnest, almost reproachful tones the voice again urged, 'If you love me, lean hard.' This incident is worth a whole volume of commentary on the nature of true love, which is happiest when it can do most for the loved one.—*Boston Recorder.*

WINNING BY GUILF.

ONE morning Mrs. Vicars received an anonymous letter from a district visitor, giving her the address of a woman whom the letter stated to be one of the worst characters in Brighton, and a great corrupter of others; so bad, indeed, that no respectable person had thought of entering her house for many a long year. But as the writer had been told that Mrs. Vicars did not shrink from visiting the vilest, would she go and see her? adding, that could any impression be made on her, it might be the means of saving scores.

black, who lay as if asleep on a sofa, opened her eyes, saw the old woman, and instantly asked, in a kind tone, "Have you lost anything, ma'am?"

"No, dear. I'm looking for the heatin' place, to have a warm 'fore I goes out again. My eyes is poor, and I don't seem to find the furnace nowheres."

"Here it is," and the lady led her to the steam radiator, placed a chair, and showed her how to warm her feet.

"Well, now, ain't that nice!" said the old woman; spreading her ragged mittens to dry. "Thanky dear, this is proper comfortable, ain't it? I'm most froze to-day, bein' lame and wimbly; and not selling much makes me-kind of down-hearted."

The lady smiled, went to the counter, bought a cup of tea and some sort of food, carried it herself to the old woman, and said, as respectfully and kindly as if the poor woman had been dressed in silk and fur, "Won't you have a cup of hot tea? It's very comforting such a day as this."

"Sakes alive! do they give tea to this depôt?" cried the old lady, in a tone of innocent surprise that made a smile go round the room, touching the glummost face like a streak of sunshine. "Well, now, this is jest lovely," added the old lady, sipping away with a relish. "This does warm the cockles of my heart!"

While she refreshed herself, telling her story meanwhile, the lady looked over the poor little wares in the basket, bought soap and pins, shoe-strings and tape, and cheered the old soul by paying well for them.

As I watched her doing this, I thought what a sweet face she had, though I'd considered her rather plain before. I felt dreadfully ashamed of myself that I had grimly shaken my head, when the basket was offered to me; and as I saw the look of interest, sympathy, and kindness

48 CHURCH WORK VERSUS HOME DUTIES.

come to the dismal faces all around me, I did wish that I had been the magician to call it out. It was only a kind word and a friendly act, but somehow it brightened that dingy room wonderfully. It changed the faces of a dozen women, and I think it touched a dozen hearts, for I saw many eyes follow the plain, pale lady with sudden respect; and when the old woman got up to go, several persons beckoned to her and bought something, as if they wanted to repair their first negligence.

Old beggar-women are not romantic; neither are cups of tea, boot-laces, and colored soap. There were no gentlemen present to be impressed with the lady's kind act, so it wasn't done for effect, and no possible reward could be received for it, except the ungrammatical thanks of a ragged old woman. But that simple little charity was as good as a sermon to those who saw it, and I think each traveler went on her way ^{was} better for that half-hour in the dreary station. I can testify that one of them did, and nothing but the emptiness of her purse prevented her from "comforting the cockles of the heart" of every forlorn old woman she met for a week after.—By LOUISA M. ALCOT, in the *Scrap-Bag*.

CHURCH WORK VERSUS HOME DUTIES.

"**I**T is a wonder to me how Mrs. Claflin can accomplish so much, and yet never appear in the least hurried or weary! She is a constant reproof to me," said Mrs. Grant to her friend Mrs. Gordon, as the two ladies walked home together after a call upon Mrs. Claflin.

"And to me, also," replied Mrs. Gordon. "She never seems to neglect her home duties, and she has a good

many of them, too, and yet she is always ready for any Church or mission work. Her family is larger than mine, and I find it impossible to give half the time to Church work that she does."

"I cannot do it," answered Mrs. Grant; "I tried faithfully last month to attend all the meetings, and do as much as I could of the mission work. I did so much more work than usual that Mrs. Claffin expressed her gratification to one of my friends at the increased interest that Mrs. Grant seemed to be taking in Church work. But I found that I could not possibly keep it up without neglecting my home duties, which I think are of the first importance, since no one but myself can do them."

"So I think," replied Mrs. Gordon; "Did you hear what that gentle little Mrs. Glenn said to Miss Kinsey on that subject, at the sewing circle last evening?"

"No; what was it?"

"Why, Miss Kinsey was urging her to attend the evening meetings, and she said she could not leave her children. Miss Kinsey remarked in her severe way, 'I think, Mrs. Glenn, that if you were to attend the meetings, the Lord would provide some one to take care of your children.' Mrs. Glenn looked up in her sweet, serene way, and said gently, 'He *has* provided *me*, and I think he means for me to perform that duty first.' Miss Kinsey for once was silenced."

"Well," said Mrs. Grant with a sigh, "I think it is very hard to know just what to do about these things. Mrs. Claffin's children always seem to be well cared for, and her house is a model for neatness and order."

"I suppose she has more of what is styled '*faculty*' than the rest of us," said Mrs. Gordon.

"If I could be sure that it was lack of ability in me I should not mind so much; but I am afraid it is indolence


as well as inefficiency," answered Mrs. Grant; and so deeply did she take the matter to heart that the tears filled her eyes as she bade her friend "good-bye" at her door, and hastened to her own home.

That evening after tea she sat down, as usual, for a bed-time talk with her three children. The little ones counted upon this hour with mother, and missed it sadly when she was away. To-night she read them a story, and then talked it over with them, offered with them their evening prayer, and then waited till they were in bed to give the last sweet "good night kisses."

All this took time, but as she leaned over to kiss Willie, the eldest, a boy of nine years, he flung his arms round her neck, and said earnestly, "You're the very best mamma in this world. Charlie Claffin says his mother never has time to talk with him, and he always goes to bed alone: and, mamma," (in a very low tone,) "he says he ain't going to bother about saying his prayers if his mother can't spare time to hear them."

Mrs. Grant made no answer—only kissed her boy again, and, as she went down stairs, felt with Mrs. Glenn, that her home duties were her first duties. Not that she meant to stand aloof from Church work, but only to make it second to these home duties, especially the training of the little immortals that had been intrusted to her care.—*By* IDA T. THURSTON.

SAYING "PLEASE."

HO could help loving fair-haired, bright-eyed little Bonnell? He is one of those mischievous eight-year-olds that one must pet in spite of one's self. And yet he is not all mischief, either. Now

and then he makes one's eyes open with astonishment, and one's hands go up with the exclamation :

"What a child !"

Bonnell's pa is rather careless about religious matters, and sits down at the table without thinking of the blessing.

"Pa," said the little fellow the other day, "ma says God made you. Did he, pa?"

"Yes, he made me."

"Well, pa, are you glad He made you?"

"Why, Bonnell, of course I am; what questions you do ask."

The child's mind was evidently working out a problem, but he did not exactly know what it was.

After a pause :

"Pa, what does uncle Sam ask a blessing at the table for?"

"I reckon because he wants to."

"He says he wants to thank God for his dinner, but I told him that you worked for your dinner and made it. God does not give it to you, does He pa?"

"Well, yes; I suppose He gives me mine too."

Bonnell looked up with astonishment, and then fell to vigorously with his knife and fork. Suddenly he asked again:

"Pa, does God want uncle Sam to thank Him?"

"Yes, child, I suppose so."

More silence.

"Pa, I'm mighty glad God is not like you, for if He was, we would never get any thing more to eat, and then we'd starve."

"Why, Bonnell, what do you mean?"

"I was just thinking. You would not give aster that apple, 'cos she would not say 'please,' and if God is that sort of way, He never would give us anything more, because we do not thank Him, like uncle Sam."

"Be quiet, Bonnell, you do not know what you are talking about."

The rest of the meal was eaten in silence, but that very night at tea, Bonnell's father astonished his family by saying "Please" to God.—*Presbyterian*.

BESSIE KENDRICK'S JOURNEY.

"**C**ARS stop twenty minutes!" called out Conductor Richardson at Allen's Junction. Then, as the train came to a dead halt, he jumped down upon the depôt platform, ran along to the front of the long line of passenger cars, where the engine was standing, and, swinging himself up into the cab, said to the engineer:

"Frank, I want you to come back to the first passenger coach and see a little girl that I don't hardly know what to make of."

Frank nodded, without speaking, deliberately wiped his oily, smoky hands in a bunch of "waste," took a look at his grim, dusty face in the narrow little mirror that hung beside the steam-gauge, pulled off his short frock, put on a coat, changed his little black, greasy cap for a soft felt hat, taking these "dress up" articles from the tender-box, where an engineer always has something stowed away for any emergency, and went back to the car, as requested.

He entered the car and made his way to the seat where the kind-hearted conductor sat talking to a bright-looking little girl, about nine years old, oddly dressed in a woman's shawl and bonnet.

Several of the passengers were grouped around the seat, evidently much interested in the child, who wore a sad, prematurely old countenance, but seemed to be neither timid nor confused.

"Here is the engineer," said the conductor, kindly, as Frank approached.

She held up her hand to him, with a winsome smile breaking over her pinched little face, and said :

"My Papa was an engineer before he became sick and went to live on a farm in Montana. He is dead and my Mamma is dead. She died first, before Willie and Susie. My Papa used to tell me that after he should be dead there would be no one to take care of me, and then I must get on the cars and go to his old home in Vermont. And he said, if the conductors would not let me ride because I hadn't any ticket, I must ask for the engineer and tell him that I was James Kendrick's little girl, and that he used to run on the M—and S—road."

The pleading blue eyes were now suffused with tears; but she did not cry after the manner of children in general.

Engineer Frank stooped down and kissed her very tenderly; and then, as he brushed the tears away from his own eyes, said :

"Well, my dear, so you are little Bessie Kendrick. I rather think a merciful Providence guided you on board this train."

Then, turning to the group of passengers, he went on :—

"I knew Jim Kendrick well. He was a man out of ten thousand. When I first came to Indiana, before I got acclimated, I was sick a great part of the time, so that I could not work; and I got homesick and discouraged. Couldn't keep my board-bill paid up, to say nothing of my doctor's bill, and didn't much care whether I lived or died.

"One day, when the pay-car came along and the men were getting their monthly wages, there wasn't a cent coming to me; for I hadn't been free from the ague nor worked an hour for the last month.

"I felt so 'blue' that I sat down on a pile of rail-road ties and leaned my elbows on my knees, with my head in my hands, and cried like a great boy, out of sheer homesickness and discouragement.

"Pretty soon one came along and said, in a voice that seemed like sweet music in my ears, for I hadn't found much real sympathy, although the boys were all good to me in their way: 'You've been having a rough time of it, and you must let me help you out.'

"I looked up, and there stood Jim Kendrick, with his month's pay in his hand. He took out from the roll of bills a twenty-dollar note and held it out to me.

"I knew he had a sickly wife and two or three children, and that he had a hard time of it himself to pull through from month to month, so I said, half ashamed of the tears that were still streaming down my face: 'Indeed, I cannot take the money. You must need it yourself.'

"'Indeed, you will take it, man,' said Jim. 'You will be all right in a few days and then you can pay it back. Now come home with me to supper and see the babies. It will do you good.'

"I took the note and accepted the invitation, and after that went to his house frequently, until he moved away, and I gradually lost sight of him.

"I had returned the loan; but it was impossible to repay that little act of kindness done me, and I guess Jim Kendrick's little girl here won't want for anything, if I can prevent it."

Then, turning again to the child, whose bright blue eyes were wide open now, the engineer said to her:

"I'll take you home with me, when we get up to Wayne. My wife will fix you up, and we'll write and find out whether those Vermont folks want you or not. If they do, Mary or I shall go on with you. But if they don't care

much about having you, you shall stay with us and be our little girl, for we have none of our own. You look very like your father, God bless him."

Just then the Eastern train whistled. Engineer Frank vanished out of the car-door and went forward to his engine, wiping his eyes with his coat-sleeve, while the conductor and passengers could not suppress the tears this little episode evoked during the 'twenty minutes' stop at Allen's Junction.—By MRS. ANNIE A. PRESTON, in the *Independent*.



A YOUNG LADY'S INFLUENCE.



YOUNG man called, in company with several other gentlemen, upon a young lady. Her father was also present, to assist in entertaining the callers. He did not share his daughter's scruples against the use of spirituous drinks, for he had wine to offer. The wine was poured out, and would soon have been drunk, but the young lady asked: "Did you call upon me or upon papa?"

Gallantry, if nothing else, compelled them to answer, "We called upon you."

"Then you will please not drink wine; I have lemonade for my callers."

The father urged the guests to drink, and they were undecided. The young lady added: "Remember, if you called upon me, then you drink lemonade, but if on papa, why, in that case I have nothing to say."

The wine glasses were set down with their contents untasted.

After leaving the house, one of the party exclaimed, "That is the most effectual temperance lecture I have ever heard."

Indeed, it was seed sown in good ground. It took root, sprang up, and is now bearing fruit. The young man, from whom these facts were obtained, broke off at once from the use of all strong drink, and is now, as a clergyman, preaching temperance and religion.



WHAT WILL YOU SAY?

HOPU was a young Sandwich Islander who was brought to this country to be educated. At a social gathering in the home where he was boarding, an infidel lawyer tried to amuse himself with asking the lad puzzling questions, until he was greatly confused. At last, turning to the lawyer, in an earnest tone, the native said,

"I am a poor heathen boy, sir, and cannot help it if you are amused at my mistakes and blunders in English. But there will soon be a big meeting, much bigger than this. We shall all be there. All men will be there, and we shall all be asked one question, 'Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?' Now, sir, I can say, Yes. What will *you* say, sir?"

The whole company were silent, and the lawyer was very much confused; yet, wishing to cover his defeat, he proposed that the native should pray before they separated. He did so without any hesitation, and as he poured out his soul to God in prayer, the lawyer's heart was touched, and he sobbed aloud. The company separated, but the question still rung in the lawyer's ears: "What will *you* say?" until he came, a humble penitent, to the Saviour he had so long denied.

Do not be afraid to show your colors. The honest question of the stranger lad did what a whole life in a Christian land had not done for the infidel.

A TOUCHING INCIDENT.



FEW years since, a number of colored children were gathered into a mission Sabbath-school. The parents had been the lowest of the slaves, the families disorganized, drinking—supported mainly by the children, who either begged or sold trifles. The few young women who undertook the instruction of these, feeling that they would be under their influence but a short time—the families breaking up and changing location—endeavored to teach them as simply as possible “the truth as it is in Jesus.” When greatly discouraged—it was discouraging sometimes, for they were persons totally ignorant of everything worth knowing, having no ideas of the laws of life, or health, or cleanliness, or proper living in any relation, the gulf seemingly impassable between their condition and that of common respectability—the teachers encouraged each other, saying, “I do believe some of these children are Christians now, and know what it is to trust the Lord; and that the germ of a new life is transforming their lives.”

A test came. By a sad accident one of the little girls was fearfully burned. The case was distressing beyond description. In a small room—if it can be called a room, having no floor and only holes for windows—in such a place, occupied by two families, on straw, in rags and destitution, little Estelle suffered anguish inexpressible. Every day the burns were dressed, the process consuming two hours, and the excruciating pain utterly exhausting the sufferer, and through sympathy, the attendants. With patience all but miraculous, weeks of agony were endured by this untrained child of eleven years. The last time

it was my privilege to stand by Estelle's bedside, the burns had been dressed, and the sufferer lay faint from the fearful ordeal, when she said to me,

"You love me, Miss Annie, don't you?" I answered her I did.

"And you would stop this from hurting if you could, wouldn't you?"

"Of course I would."

"Does not Jesus love me as much as you do?"

"A great deal more. He died for you."

"And He could stop this from hurting in a minute if He chose, couldn't He?"

"Yes."

She raised to my face her large eyes, bright with the near light of the other world, and said,

"Then I think there must be some very good reason that we don't know anything about, or He would stop this hurting."

Turning her head on her pillow—it was the only part of her person she could move, the remainder was stiff in the bandages—turning her face to her pillow with very much the motion of a child nestling to rest in some one's arms, she whispered,

"Dear Lord, let it hurt as long as you see best, and then take me home to heaven."

I never saw Estelle again, for that night the Lord took her home.

Here was an unlettered child; but could the profoundest theologian evince more entire consecration than to be able to say if dying under such circumstances, "Let it hurt as long as Thou seest best."

The problem that at some time troubles every thoughtful mind—why God allows this or that—disturbed Estelle. And can the most far-reaching philosophy give a better

answer than that of this colored child, "there must be some very good reason that we know nothing about?"
—*Zion's Herald*.

HOW THE ENGINEER "LET HER OUT A LITTLE" AS HE PRAYED

NOT long ago, an engineer brought his train to a stand at a little Massachusetts village where the passengers had five minutes for lunch. A lady came along the platform and said, "The conductor tells me the train at the junction in P——leaves fifteen minutes before our arrival. It is Saturday night; that is the last train. I have a very sick child in the car, and no money for a hotel, and none for a private conveyance for the long journey into the country. What shall I do?"

"Well," said the engineer, "I wish I could tell you."

"Would it be possible for you to hurry a little?" said the anxious, tearful mother.

"No, madam, I have the time-table, and the rules say I must run by it."

She turned sorrowfully away, leaving the bronzed face of the engineer wet with tears. Presently she returned and said, "Are you a Christian?"

"I trust I am," was the reply.

"Will you pray with me that the Lord may, in some way, delay the train at the junction?"

"Why, yes, I will pray with you, but I have not much faith."

Just then the conductor cried, "All aboard!" The poor woman hurried back to her deformed and sick child, and away went the train climbing the grade.

"Somehow," said the engineer, "everything worked to a charm. As I prayed, I couldn't help letting my engine out just a little. We hardly stopped at the first station, people got on and off with wonderful alacrity, the conductor's lantern was in the air in half a minute and then away again. Once over the summit it was dreadful easy to give her a little more, and then a little more, as I prayed, till she seemed to shoot through the air like an arrow. Somehow I couldn't hold her, knowing I had the road, and so we dashed up to the junction six minutes ahead of time."

There stood the other train, the conductor with his lantern on his arm. "Well," said he, "will you tell me what I am waiting here for? Somehow I felt I must wait your coming to-night, but I don't know why." "I guess," said the brother conductor, "it is for this woman, with her sick and deformed child, dreadfully anxious to get home this Saturday night." But the men on the engine and the grateful mother think they can tell why the train waited.—*Watchman.*

"FOR NOTHING."

"**G**OD giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not."

I was recently appointed to labor for a short season down by the sea on the coast of Lancashire. A large building was taken for services on the Lord's day, and some advertisements were sent out; but from uncontrollable circumstances there were no local friends to help in the work. Accordingly, on the morning of the Sabbath, I presented myself at the Assembly Rooms, and was shown by the hall-keeper into a very handsome and

spacious hall, where all needful preparations had been made for public worship. I had brought a boy with me to distribute hymns, and leaving him without, took my place to wait for the expected audience. The time announced was half-past ten; and at ten o'clock the whole town was notified thereof by the clashing of a great peal of bells—from the Romanist Church, the largest and handsomest place of worship in the town (whereof let Protestants take note). I waited until the time appointed; but *no one* came. I waited on, with the same result, feeling more miserable and depressed than ever before; still no one came. A few of the theatricals peeped in upon me, and some of the tavern-waiters, but none entered; and at eleven o'clock my patience was exhausted, and I left the place, to meet at the door the feigned and mocking condolences of the theatricals and waiters aforesaid. The sea-beach was but a few yards distant and full in view; and the long esplanade fronting the sea was literally black with people, walking, lounging, and sitting in the calm sunshine, and inhaling the gentle breeze from the sea.

As I walked along in utter loneliness, I felt most keenly the Master's wisdom in sending out *two* and *two*. If I had had only one friend, the feeling of loneliness would never have been experienced; but I was alone. Then I lifted up my heart to the Lord, asking that my utter failure might yet redound to His glory in the attempt I now resolved to make to speak in the open air.

On a spot where the beach shelved gently down I took my stand, with my back to the sea and my face to the crowded esplanade above. I read, as loudly as possible, Isaiah lv., and then engaged in prayer. So prepared to speak for Jesus, I looked fully around for the first time, and there were hundreds of people stopping to hear. I

had to abandon the sermon I had prepared, and to cast myself on the Lord for a word in season; and then I commenced as follows:—

"I want you to think of a bitter east wind, a declining day, fast falling snow, and a short muddy street in London, at the far east. Put these thoughts together, and add to them the picture of a tall stout man, in a rough great-coat, with a large comforter round his neck, buffeting through the wind and storm. The darkness is coming rapidly, as a man with a basket on his head turns the corner of the street, and there are two of us on opposite sides. He cries loudly as he goes, 'Herrings! three a penny! red herrings, good and cheap, at three a penny!' So crying he passes along the street, crosses at its end, and comes to where I am standing at the corner. Here he pauses, evidently wishing to fraternize with somebody, as a relief from the dull time and disappointed hopes of trade. I presume I appear a suitable object, as he comes close to me and commences conversation.

"'Governor' (the rough coat and comforter look anything but professionally ministerial), 'what do you think of these 'ere herrings?'

"As he speaks I note that he has three in his hand, while the remaining stock are deftly balanced in the basket on his head.

"'Don't you think they're good?' and he offers me the opportunity of testing them by scent, which I courteously but firmly decline; 'and don't you think they're cheap as well?'

"I assert my decided opinion that they are good and cheap.

"'Then, look you, governor, why can't I sell 'em? yer have I walked a mile and a half along this dismal place,

offering these good and cheap 'uns; and nobody don't buy none!

"I do not at all wonder at that,' I answer.

"Tell us why not; governor, tell us why not.'

"The people have no work at all to do, and they are starving; there are plenty of houses round here that have not had a penny in them for many a day,' was my convincing but unsatisfactory reply.

"Ah! then, governor,' he rejoined, 'I've put my foot in it this time; I knew they was werry poor, but I thought three a penny 'ud tempt 'em. But if they haven't the ha'pence, they can't spend 'em, sure enough: so there's nothing for it but to carry 'em back, and try and sell 'em elsewhere. I thought by selling cheap after buying cheap, I could do them good, and earn a trifle for myself. But I'm done this time.'

"How much will you take for the lot?' I inquired.

"First a keen look at me,—then down came the basket from his head—then a rapid calculation—then a grinning inquiry—

"Do you mean profit an' all, governor?"

"Yes.'

"Then I'll take four shillin', and be glad to get 'em.'

"I put my hand in my pocket, produced that amount, and transferred it to him.

"Right! governor, thank 'ee! what'll I do with 'em?' he said, as he quickly transferred the coins to his own pocket.

"Go round this corner into the middle of the road, shout with all your might, *Herrings for nothing!* and give three to every man, woman, and child that comes to you, till the basket is emptied.'

"On hearing these instructions, he immediately reproduced the money, and carefully examined it piece by piece. Being satisfied of its genuineness, he again

replaced it, and then looked very keenly and questioningly at me.

"Well," I said, "Is it all right and good?"

"Yes," said he.

"Then the herrings are mine, and I can do as I like with them; but if you don't like to do as I tell you, give me my money back."

"All right! governor, an' they *are* yours; so if you says it, here goes!"

"Accordingly he proceeded into the middle of the adjoining street, and went along shouting aloud 'Herrings for nothing! real good red herrings for nothing!'

"Out of sight myself, I stood at the corner to watch his progress; and speedily he neared a house where a tall woman I knew stood at the first-floor window, looking out upon him.

"Here you are, missus," he bawled, "herrings for nothing! a fine chance for yer; come an' take 'em!"

"The woman shook her head unbelievably, and left the window.

"Vot a fool!" said he; "but they won't be all so." "Herrings for nothing!" A little child came out to look at him; and he called to her, "Yer, my dear, take these in to your mother, tell her how cheap they are,—herrings for nothing." But the child was afraid of him and them, and ran in doors. So down the street, in the snowy slush and mud, went the cheap fish, the vendor crying loudly as he went, "Herrings for nothing!" and then added savagely, "Oh, you fools!" Thus he reached the very end; and then turning to retrace his steps, he continued his double cry, as he came, "Herrings for nothing!" and then in a lower but very audible key, "Oh, you fools!"

"Well!" I said to him calmly, as he reached me at the corner.

" 'Well!' he repeated, 'if yer think so! When you gave the money for herrings as yer didn't want, I thought you was training for a lunatic 'sylum! now I thinks as all the people round here are fit company for yer. But what'll I do with the herrings! if yer don't want 'em and they won't have 'em.'

" 'We'll try again together,' I replied; 'I will come with you this time, and we'll both shout.'

" Into the road we both went; and he shouted once more and for the last time, 'Herrings for nothing!'

" Then I called out loudly also, 'Will any one have some herrings for tea?'

" They heard the voice, and they knew it well; and they came out at once, in two's and three's, and sixes, men and women and children, all striving to reach the welcome food. As fast as I could take them from the basket, I handed three to each eager applicant, until all were speedily disposed of. When the basket was empty, the hungry crowd that had none was far greater than those that had been supplied; but they were too late; there were no more. 'Herrings for nothing!'

" Foremost among the disappointed was a tall woman of a bitter tongue, who began vehemently, 'Why haven't I got any? ain't I as good as they? ain't my children as hungry as theirs? Why haven't I got any?'

" Before I had time to reply, the vendor stretched out his arm toward her, saying, 'Why, governor, that's the very woman I offered 'em to first and she turned up her nose at 'em.'

" 'I didn't,' she rejoined passionately; 'I didn't believe you meant it?'

" 'Yer goes without for yer unbelief!' he replied; 'Good night; and thank 'ee, governor.'

As I told the story upon the sea-beach, the crowd gathered and increased, and looked at each other; then laughed outright, and at length roared with laughter.

It was my time then! and I said, "You cannot help laughing at the quaint story, which is strictly true. But are you sure you would not have done as they did, been as unbelieving as they? Nay! are you sure you are not ten thousand times worse than they? Their unbelief only cost them a hungry stomach a little longer; but what may your unbelief cost you? God—not man—God has sent *His* messengers to you repeatedly for many years, to offer pardon *for nothing!* peace *for nothing!* salvation *for nothing!* He has sent to your houses, your hearts, the most loving and tender offers that even an Almighty God could frame; and what have you replied? Have you taken the trouble to reply at all? Have you not turned away in utter scornful unbelief, like the woman; or run away in fear, like the little child? Many have heard a voice they believed; and they have received the gifts of God; but you are still without a hope on earth, or a home in heaven, because you will not believe God's messengers when they offer you, by His commandment, all that you need for time and eternity—*for nothing!*

"Take warning by that disappointed crowd of hungry applicants. When they were convinced the offer was in good faith, and would gladly have shared with their fellows, they were *too late!* They were thoroughly convinced; they were quite willing then to participate; but their faith and knowledge came only in time to increase their hunger and misery!

"Let it not be so with you! Do not you be in that awfully large crowd of disappointed ones, who will be obliged to believe, when belief will not help them; whose knowledge when it comes, as surely it will come, will only

increase eternal sorrow that they put off believing until it was *too late* !”

As I looked earnestly upon that vast crowd upon the sea-shore, the laughter was utterly gone, and an air of uneasy conviction was plainly traceable upon many faces.

“ Will you not come to God by Jesus now ?” I entreated. “ He is waiting, watching for, pleading with you ! there is salvation, full, free, and eternal ; uttermost, complete redemption ; forgiveness, help, guidance, and blessing— *all for nothing* ! ‘ without money and without price.’ Friends ! the food was paid for, though afterward freely given. So your salvation is paid for (by a price which only He who paid it knows ; and I am come from the great city to urge you to take, and be safe and happy for ever !”

Though we had no place to retire to, it was good to walk up and down on the beach, showing the way of God more perfectly to some who were attracted and impressed by this commencement of a Sermon by the Sea.—*By C. J. WHITMORE, in the British Messenger.*



AN UNFORTUNATE SATURDAY—BUT FORTUNATE BOY.




JOHNS Saturday was a complete failure. In the first place, it rained. Secondly, he over-slept himself, and didn't get up till breakfast was over. Thirdly, he couldn't find the mate to his thick boot. Fourthly, in dressing, he got soap in his eyes and a tooth-brush bristle in his throat. Fifthly, he caught his heel in the rope door-mat, and fell headlong off the front stoop. Sixthly, just as he was picking himself up, his grandmother called him to come in again because it was rain-

ing. Seventhly, as soon as he was inside, his mother made him take off "those forlorn old clothes," because it was going to clear off. Eighthly, he put his knife and new ball in his pocket, and on his way to Bill Scudder's house, to get Bill to go nutting with him, he lost the knife out of a hole in the pocket. Ninthly, Bill had just been seized with the measles and couldn't go. Tenthly, John consoled himself with pitching his ball, and it went plump into the cornfield and was lost forever. Eleventhly, he ran into widow Morris's to get a drink of water, and somehow the glass slipped through his fingers and broke into fifty pieces. Twelfthly, it was raining hard when he came out, and he ran into the widow's woodshed for shelter, and tore his new coat on a nail in the door. Thirteenthly, he comforted himself by poking at a hornets' nest with a sharp stick, and one of the hornets stung him on his eye before he could say Jack Robinson. Fourteenthly, rushing out to put mud on the place, he stumbled and fell into a big puddle. Fifteenthly, the widow's fierce dog then flew at him and tore his trowsers. Sixteenthly, it cleared up suddenly, and while he was walking home, all muddy and torn, and with that swollen eyelid, he met Mamie Green, the prettiest little girl in the place. Seventeenthly, on reaching home he found that the hogs had been in his garden and destroyed his pumpkins. Eighteenthly, his brother reminded him that he had a composition to write for Monday. Nineteenthly, his eye was so much better that he was afraid he couldn't have an excuse for not writing the composition. Twentiethly, his tooth began to ache. Twenty-firstly, company came to supper, and he had to "wait;" and Twenty-secondly, he went to bed.

Poor fellow! How wretched he must have been! Why? Who said so? John never said it. On the contrary, he whistled all the time he was undressing.

The fun of it all is that John was such a happy, good-natured fellow that nothing ever troubled him much; and he always spoke of this Saturday as having the jolliest lot of "fixes" in it that ever a fellow had.—*Hearth and Home.*

THE THREE SIEVES.

" H, mamma!" cried little Blanche Philpott, "I heard such a tale about Edith Howard! I did not think she could have been so naughty. One day—"

"My dear," interrupted Mrs. Philpott, "before you continue we will see if your story will pass the three sieves."

"What does that mean, mamma?" said Blanche.

"I will explain it, dear. In the first place, is it true?"

"I suppose so, mamma. I heard it from Miss Parry, who said a friend of Miss White's told her the story; and Miss White is a great friend of Edith's."

"And does she show her friendship by telling tales of her? In the next place, though you cannot prove it is true, is it kind?"

"I did not mean to be unkind, mamma, but I am afraid I was. I should not like Edith to speak of me as I have spoken of her."

"And is it necessary?"

"No, of course, mamma; there was no need for me to mention it at all."

"Then, dear Blanche, pray that your tongue may be governed, and that you may not indulge in evil speaking."
—*Sunday School Visitor.*

FAMILY WORSHIP AT MR. LYMAN'S.

WE gathered, after breakfast, in the parlor, or sitting-room they call it, for the Lymans have no "best room" that is too good for their own daily use. The September morning was just damp enough to warrant the flame of a few kindlings in the grate. Little Mary chose her seat on the floor, between Emily, the hired girl, and the fire. Seven-year-old Ned stood beside his father's chair, with his father's arm around him. The aspect of the circle was not specially solemn, but it was altogether pleasant. An air of anticipation, as if they expected to enjoy the exercises, was noticeable for its contrast to the uninterested resignation with which children so often go through the formality of family prayers.

"Well, mamma," said Mr. Lyman, after all were in place, "what did we read about yesterday morning?"

"How Christ cleansed the poor leper, and cured the centurion's servant," replied Mrs. Lyman.

"And somefin else," interposed little Mary.

"What was that?" said her father.

"About the woman—that was real sick—and when Jesus come in—and took hold of her hand—he made her well—right off—and she got the dinner," was the reply, scanned off with deliberate earnestness.

"Well, Bessie," said her father, "you may tell us about the leper." And Bessie, a little hesitant because of the company, briefly told, in her own words, what a dreadful disease it was, and how the poor man was healed by the Saviour. Then Ned, in his turn, gave the story of the centurion, an officer "who told his soldiers to go just where he was a mind to."

The reading of the last half of the chapter, the eighth of

Matthew, followed. The children were as attentive as if it were the bed-time story. As he went along, Mr. Lyman explained the harder words and obscurer expressions, bringing out here and there, with little touches of comment, the lesson of the incidents narrated; Mrs. Lyman dropped now and then a suggestion as to meaning or application; Emily and the children interposed whatever questions occurred to them—Mary's sometimes being slightly irrelevant; and Mr. Lyman closed with a little incident of army experience illustrative of faith in God in times of peril. This was followed by three stanzas of "Sweet Hour of Prayer," Mrs. Lyman leading at the organ, and the children joining heartily in the singing. Then came Mr. Lyman's prayer—brief, and free from much-worn phrases, reverent and fervent in adoration, but almost conversational in expression, thankful for home mercies, and especially for the Saviour, of whose works of love they had just been reading, not forgetting the needy world, but chiefly concerned with family wants. That Emily escaped with such slight injury in her fall the day before; that Johnny might not for a moment forget to be true to the right amid the temptations of his school associations that day; that they were having such a pleasant visit with the friends who had come to see them; that the Blakes, over the way, who had just lost their baby, might find comfort in looking to the Lord, and that this sorrow might win the father from his intemperate life; that the Sunday-school concert passed off so pleasantly the night before,—each formed the subject of petition or thanksgiving. All joined in the Lord's Prayer in closing.

The whole service charmed me by its naturalness, its heartiness, and its freshness. I told Mr. Lyman as much, as we leisurely walked down to the bank that morning, and that it had given me some hints that I should try to work

up at home. "But I shall not expect to make it as interesting as you do," I added, "for you evidently have a special knack for it."

"Thank you!" he replied, with a smile; "but you are mistaken, I think, if you suppose that I have any more talent in this line than most people. The secret of the 'knack' in this case—as in many matters, I suspect, where knack gets the credit—is *preparation*. When we began house-keeping we fell into the routine of family worship,—a chapter each day, in inexorable course, with a book-mark to keep the place lest we should forget which chapter we read the previous morning, and a prayer which went the usual round of stereotyped petition. We were not heartless in it by any means, though it seems almost heartless now, as I look back on it and think how much *more* heart we might have put in it. But as the children grew up to an age when they ought to take some interest in it, I woke with a sort of start, one day, to the fact of what a listless, innutritious exercise it was to them. I saw that Johnny's thoughts were generally somewhere else, and that *amen* brought a welcome release to the body that had not been able to wander with them. One night we talked it over, my wife and I, after we went to bed. It seemed to us that family worship ought to be made more interesting to little folks than it was to us when we were children, than it had been to our children. And, little by little, we have felt our way into our present method. First, I determined to see what I could do to make our Scripture reading more interesting. I decided that it was just as well worth while to 'prepare' for the chapter I read at family prayers as for the lesson I taught at Sunday-school. At first it seemed impossible to do this seven times in a week; and for a while I made floundering work of it, until I hit upon my present practice. I keep my

Bible on my desk at the bank, and I find enough snatches of leisure in the busiest day, by looking out for them, even if none of them are more than two minutes long, to familiarize myself with the portion to be read the next morning. Then, as I go to and from my meals, I turn it over in my mind. If there are points that I am not clear upon, I take down my commentary for a few moments after supper or before breakfast, and post myself. I keep an eye out during the day for any incident that may illustrate any part of it for the children, or try to recall some fact from my reading or past experience that may serve the same purpose. I am busier than most men, but I have no difficulty, by watching my opportunities, in finding time for all this. And the difference in the relish with which I take up the Bible at family worship, after such preparation, is more than any one can imagine who has not tried it. To have the Word near me as the reserve topic of thought in the intervals of business I find a great gain also. It keeps me in just the spiritual atmosphere that I need; and time and again has it happened that the truth in the chapter for the day has come to me in some exigency of temptation, or some opportunity for Christian service, as if God had spoken it for that very hour. I feel as if I could not afford to get along in the old way at all. Besides, if it were not for some such plan as this, I should be apt to let the months slip by with almost no systematic study of the Bible whatever. Mrs. Lyman does much the same thing during the day, as she has opportunity, and she selects beforehand the hymn that we shall sing. Sometimes we sing the tunes the children have learned in Sunday-school; but more often the good old church tunes that wear so well and that the children quickly learn to love full as much as the galloping Sunday-school music. I wish they were used in Sunday-school more than they are."

"Do you read the Bible right through in course?" I asked.

"Oh, no! I should almost as soon think of taking a hotel bill of fare in course at dinner, day by day, until I had finished it. We are reading the Gospels in course now; but I shall hardly think it worth while, on the children's account, to go through the Epistles in that way. I have thought of taking up the Old Testament history by-and-by; reading the portions they could grasp, and threading together what I skip in a few words of my own, as we go along. I find it quickens their interest greatly to question them briefly on what we read the day before, especially to let them put the story into their own words. It is twice as much their own then as it was before. But I guard specially against tiring them with *long* exercises. We never sing more than two or three stanzas, and never read a whole chapter. Indeed, we pay very little attention to those arbitrary divisions any way,—as if one could expect to find the natural stopping places in a story by measuring it off by the yard!"

"Nevertheless," I protested, "all this preparation must take a good deal of time, and more than some busy men could find for it, I think."

"It pays to take the time, and it is easier to find it than any one supposes till he tries. We let our minds run vagrant more than we think. I have occasion to go to the grocery to-night: if I have no special topic on my mind as I walk, my thoughts are chasing about in all sorts of idle speculations, without even the advantage of a healthy rest for the brain. It is easy, and better every way, to train them to run on some pleasant but helpful errand like this. I have concluded that it is little short of irreverence to rush into the presence of God in prayer without some consideration beforehand of what I am to say to him. While

I am dressing in the morning, or hoeing in the garden, or filling the furnace, as the case may be, I run over in my mind the appropriate subjects for thanksgiving and application that day. I often say to myself, as I kneel down, 'Now do not let me utter a word that I do not *feel*.' I dread to get into a rut of phrases, where a prayer may run smoothly with so little heart in it."

Just then we reached the bank, and the conversation closed. But the more I think about it the more it seems to me that Mr. Lyman is nearer right in this matter than most of us.—By J. B. T. MARSH, in the *Christian Union*.

"WHAT THEN?"

WHEN Philip de Neri, who, in the sixteenth century, renounced the hereditary honors of Florentine nobility for the service of the living God, was living in an Italian university, a young man ran to him with a face full of delight, and told him he had come to the law-school of that place on account of its great fame, and that he intended to spare no pains or labor to get through his studies as soon as possible.

Philip waited for his conclusion with great patience and then said :

"Well, and when you have got through your course of studies, what do you mean to do?"

"Then I shall take my doctor's degree," answered the young man.

"And then?" asked Philip again.

"And then," continued the youth, "I shall have a number of difficult questions to manage, shall catch

people's notice by my eloquence, my zeal, my learning, my acuteness, and gain a great reputation."

"And then?" repeated the holy man.

"And then?" replied the youth, "why, there can't be a question I shall be promoted to some high office or other. Besides, I shall make money and grow rich."

"And then?" repeated Philip.

"And then," pursued the young lawyer, "then I shall be comfortably and honorably situated in wealth and dignity."

"And then?" asked the holy man.

"And then," said the youth, "and then—and then—then I shall die."

"Here Philip raised his voice, "AND WHAT THEN?"

Whereupon the young man made no answer, but cast down his head and went away. The last "And then" had, like lightning, pierced his soul, and he could not get rid of it. Soon after, he forsook the law, and gave himself to the ministry of Christ, spending the remainder of his days in godly words and works.

A'S OPINION OF B.



ONE day our Lord "Spake a parable to them that trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." A large audience that! It is a way we all have, more or less.

A exclaims, "Did you ever see anybody so stingy as B? I could easier give away five dollars than he could give cents."

B. says, "If I had as much money as A has, I know I would make a more sensible use of it."

C remarks, "What a shabby-looking piece D is! I am thankful I have more taste than she has."

D sighs, "What a vain creature poor C is! I should feel guilty to spend so much time on dress as she does."

E exclaims "What an awkward gawky F is! I bless my stars I have some idea how to carry myself in society."

F sneers, "E is nothing but a lady's man. I suppose girls are just silly enough to like such a monkey; but I thank heaven I have a little sense, whatever they think of me."

Schoolboy G says, "What a dunce that H is! I should be ashamed to make such a fool of myself in class as he does."

H thinks, "Before I would be such a digger as G is, I like to enjoy something as I go along."

J whispers, "I should think K would feel like a liar—such outrageous exaggeration! I would sooner cut my hand off than misrepresent so."

K congratulates himself he isn't such a blunt blurter as his friend J.

L is thankful she was never left to be so indifferent to religion as M is.

M thinks if she was a church-member she would try to show a better spirit than L.

N does not see how O can be so gay when she is on the way to hell.

O does not see how N can be so somber if she thinks she is on the road to heaven.

P thanks God he isn't such a bigot as Q.

Q offers equally hearty thanks he isn't so miserably loose in his notions as P.

R thinks it is dreadful to see how S lets her children run over her. She would just like to give them one good shaking all around.

S. pities R's poor boys, to be held in every minute with bit and bridle. She would just like to get hold of them for one day, and give them a good romp with her children.

T would rather be as poor as he is than drive such hard bargains as U does.

U thinks T is a fool to be so slack in his business. Why if *he* had had those same chances he would have made a fortune long ago.

V thinks W had better be just before he is generous; if *he* were to give away, with so many debts on his shoulders, he would feel that he was stealing from his creditors.

W really does not understand how any one can be so hard-hearted as V.

X is thankful he isn't a blasphemer like Y, and

Y rejoices that whatever he is, he is not a hypocrite like X.

"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth."—*By JENNY BRADFORD, in the Congregationalist.*

SAVED BY OLD "CORONATION."

T was—I do not remember the precise year—but it was when I was about seventeen years old, and when I lived in the New England village where I was born, and from which I had hardly ever been away.

It was the day before Thanksgiving, the only holiday that New England knows much about, and about which the rest of the world knows so very little. For three nights before, the cold had been very severe for that time

of the year, and the newly formed ice on the pond was as smooth and clear as a looking glass. What were we all to do the next day, "the gladdest, merriest day" of all the year, besides go to church and eat the feast that had been so long in preparation? That was the question asked by my strong, earnest, older friend, who had come from Boston to spend Thanksgiving.

"Skate, of course," I answered.

"But why not try the ice to-night?" he asked.

I could see no reason, and so we bound on our skates and flew, as it were, over the glassy surface of the pond to the cove, about which were the piles of pine tree boughs. Once there, we conceived the idea of how grand it would be to skate back to the village, collect together the women and girls, take suitable provisions for a picnic, place them all in sleighs and on hand sleds, draw them to this place, and eat a supper on these rocks amid the glare of the burning tree tops. We were not long in carrying out our plans, for almost every house had its sleighs and skaters, and those who were destitute of either, united with some of their neighbors. An hour, and the little lake was covered by the merriest skating party that it had ever witnessed. And then the supper, the bonfire, the songs, the merry-making. I shudder to think of such boisterous sport, with an impending death so very near! The sport was over at length; the apples eaten, the cider drunk, the songs sung, the stories told, and the once great flames among the resinous pine needles were now smoldering among the limbs or lingering in the stumps and roots. It was clearly time to go. And so the company was breaking up into little knots as we came.

"Tie all the sleighs and sleds together," my strong friend shouted, the last to leave the spot. The order from our leader was soon obeyed. Each little vehicle

was ranged from ten to twenty feet apart, according to the length of the ropes or leading lines which we had; and three or four skaters were stationed between them. Then, two much longer ropes were stretched from either side of the long lines of which some twenty more skaters took hold. With a shout and whoop, such as Indians give when rushing to battle, we started on the ice. The line, first straight or waving a little where the poorer skaters were, soon took the form of a crescent; and with a clamor of voices and the grating of skate irons, we sped over the ice.

My strong friend and I were on one of the side ropes, and we held the place nearest to the sleighs. We had not proceeded far before I perceived that the ice was bending up in front of us, and I could scarcely hear it crack, amid the noise of the skaters. I spoke not a word, but looked intently into my companion's face. I only thought that so long as we kept in motion as we were then doing, that we might pass the terrible danger. But I knew very well that if the true state of affairs was discovered, a panic would spread along the line—some skater would drop out, and then the sleighs and their precious burden must sink to the bottom.

I cannot forget the horror of that moment—a moment that seemed an age. I was faint myself, but I only shuddered lest some skater should fall. I could not speak for fear; but I almost feared lest the other voices should stop, and the cracking of the ice should be heard by the women, who would be sure to scream. My thoughts were on God; my eyes were fixed on the face of my friend. I was fairly drawn along up the curving ice that seemed to rise higher before us every moment. Cold sweat was on my forehead, but I could not loosen my hand from the rope to wipe it off. My friend noticed that I

was lagging—I, who was so expert a skater. His eyes caught mine, and by that sort of intuitive knowledge that we sometimes have in times of great danger, he became aware of our dreadful situation, heard the cracking of the ice, and saw it—felt it rising in front of us.

What did the strong man do? Flee like a coward from the dangers he had brought us to, and escape to the land? Did the alarm seize him that had overpowered me? Far otherwise. Raising his voice, so that it could be heard above the din of the skaters, and the merry voices of the women, he shouted: "All sing, so we will keep better step: all sing Coronation." And without lowering his voice he sang:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name
Let angels prostrate fall!
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

The order came so unexpectedly that few joined in singing this verse; but when he came to the next stanza almost all the voices were heard. I felt a sort of relief, when the soprano, alto, tenor and bass voice all struck the words,

"Crown him, ye martyrs of our God,
Who from his altar call!"

but I feared the time when the bass should be left to carry a line alone. There were but three or four bass voices in the whole company, but my friend was numbered among them. I saw he husbanded his breath for this as a strong man saves his strength for some great effort. Nevertheless, I could hear alternating with the musical words,

"Extol the stem of Jesse's rod,"

the crack-crack-crack-crack-crack-crack of the brittle shell that was between us and eternity. It was a wondrous relief when four parts instead of one, and a hundred voices instead of four took up the words which seemed like an anthem of praise,

"Extol the stem of Jesse's rod,
And crown him Lord of all."

We were now approaching the middle of the lake where the water was the deepest, so deep that no line in the village could reach the bottom, and where the ice must be thinnest, because it is the last to freeze there. I knew this ; but I felt that now we were going with such rapidity, there was no new danger so long as there was no break in the song. I singled out a tree upon the shore we were trying to make, and calculated if at the rate they were singing, there were verses enough to last until we reached it. I feared lest the leader might omit a verse as was sometimes done in church, and there might be left a space over which we might be left to pass in silence, or rather in a silence made dreadful by the cracking of the ice.

I had no cause. There was indeed that awful crack-crack-crack of the ice distinctly heard during the singing of one line in every stanza of the hymn ; but it was either that I had become used to it, or that it was indeed more faint than it was before, that it failed to affect me as at first. So, too, there was a little breadth of ice to be passed over, after the singers had closed the verse,

"Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To him all majesty ascribe,
And crown him Lord of all."

But our momentum was then such that I knew we could reach the shore in safety, which we soon did.

On reaching it there was the same boisterous noise that marked our starting, each one untying his own sled or sleigh and joining the little party with which he came. But of a peril through which they had passed, the danger from which they had been rescued, not one had the slightest intimation. For my friend and myself—the only ones who

were aware of our wonderful deliverance—we were left alone. And there on that rocky beach, with the stars above us, we sank upon our knees, our arms entwining each other's neck. It was a silent prayer we offered; an offering of thanks to "the Giver of every good and perfect gift." Not for us alone, but for all those who had been brought out of peril. Then we rose, and hand in hand we silently walked to our home.

The next day was thanksgiving; we entered into no boisterous mirth. We kept our secret to ourselves that day, and during all the time since then we have not mentioned the affair to each other. But once, long after this, when we were in church together, and the preacher gave out "Coronation," I noticed that he did not sing, but grasped my hand in his, while the tears flowed from his eyes, as though he were a child.

HOW TO WIN BOYS.

IN a speech delivered in St. Louis, J. H. Vincent told the following incident. It is such a capital illustration of how to win boys that we reprint it:

"A gentleman, residing on Fifth avenue, New York, teaches a class in a mission school where there are some rough boys. There is one boy named Bill, who had been turned out of four classes. This gentleman about decided to turn him out of his. 'He's a perfect wreck,' he says; 'I can't do anything with him.' Then he thinks again, 'No, not yet; I will save Bill if I can.' The gentleman says, 'Willie'—he has never been called Willie since he was a little bit of a fellow—'would you have any objection to come round to my house next Wednesday evening, at five o'clock, and take tea with my family? I live on Fifth

avenue, and I'd like to have you come. I have lots of pictures and books to show you. Will you come?' 'Guess I will,' says Bill; 'where do you live?' 'No. 500.' 'I guess I'll go,' says Bill.

"When Bill goes home, he goes round and looks at the Fifth avenue house, and says, 'This is the place I am going to take tea next Wednesday evening at five o'clock.' He goes home and tells his mother. She wonders at the change that has come over him. Bill says, 'I am going to take tea with my teacher, in Fifth avenue, next Wednesday evening, at five o'clock. He asked me to come, and I am going.'

"The next day he walked all the way to Fifth avenue, to No. 500, looked up at the house, thought to himself, 'Only the day after to-morrow.' Wednesday afternoon, at five o'clock prompt, Bill was before the house in a brown hat, clean paper collar, and hands and face washed clean for the first time in many a week. He feels like going down into the basement, but the teacher told him to come right up the front steps and ring the bell. He goes up, rings the bell, the gentleman meets him at the door, and takes him up into the parlor. First he hangs his hat on the rack. 'That's a pretty convenient thing to have around.' He never saw a hat-rack in his life before. When he comes into the parlor, he is afraid he will break through, the carpet is so soft. He looks at the pictures and the glass cases. At length he goes down to take tea—a little embarrassed; but the gentleman violates all etiquette rules that Bill does, and makes him feel, 'Well, I don't know but what I do as well as anybody.' He gets through with his dinner and goes up-stairs again—looks over the lesson for next Sunday—studies the pictures; he never saw so many beautiful things in his life before, in pictures. You never know what is in a rough boy. You

trample on many a pearl when you turn a rough boy aside. There is many a gem stowed away in the heart that beats in fustian. He looks up from the picture, and the gentleman tells him he too might possess such a picture of the Passover as that. The gentleman gets near to him, and as Bill looks up into his face, he clasps his hand, and says, 'Willie, won't you try?' with such earnestness in his face and voice, that Bill says, 'I will try; I will try.' And before he goes away he asks Bill to kneel down, and he offers up a prayer to the divine Father to help Bill to become a good man. And he goes out of that house and he says, 'God helping me, I will make something out of myself.'"

RELIGION TESTED.

"**D**ON'T talk gospel at me any more, Lucy. You can't make me a Christian by anything you can say. I have been preached to all my life."

This was Mr. Martin's reply to his young wife, who was timidly trying to persuade him to seek the Lord. She had been for three or four years a professor of religion herself, but had hitherto kept her little light under a bushel; so that during the two years of her married life her husband had seen small reason to think much of her piety. Now, however, a deep work of grace was going on in the church to which she belonged, and Mrs. Martin, recovered from her declension, felt a tender anxiety for her husband's conversion. But what should she do? If she might not speak to him, how could she make him feel the value of those hopes which were now so dear to her? To these questions there was to her mind but one answer: she must pray. Yes, she

must pray *for* him, and she must pray *with* him. Could she do this last? Well, it would be hard, but she would try. So she made what preparation she could in her own mind for the duty which she felt lay before her, and took the first suitable opportunity for her purpose. It was evening, and they were about to retire to rest, when, mustering all her courage, she said, "James, I want to pray with you to night." And dropping on her knees beside the bed, she offered the petitions which she had meditated. Now the poor wife was really in earnest in her desires for her husband's spiritual good; but in her anxiety not to disgust him by ill-chosen words, her prayer was studied and formal. So, however her intercession might prevail with God, who knoweth the heart, in her husband's sight it was an utter failure, and he told her so.

"Kindly, but plainly, Lucy, you are not equal to the situation," he said. "I respect religion when I see it, though that is seldom enough, Heaven knows. But it don't consist chiefly in preaching and praying; and if you 'ave nothing better than that to offer, you may as well give me up."

Saddened and discouraged by his words, Lucy burst into a passion of tears and cried as if her heart were breaking. At this, Mr. Martin, though a fond and indulgent husband, became greatly irritated. Doubtless his conscience reproached him somewhat, as having, by his persistent disregard of the subject in which she was deeply interested, given occasion for some of this bitter grief. But this thought, if he felt it, did not tend to soothe him. So he gave vent to his exasperation in tones of decided and severe rebuke.

"I have told you, Lucy, that neither preaching nor praying will make a convert of me; and you may as well understand that it isn't of any use to cry over me either.

I don't believe in pious talk or long prayers or crying. When you get ready to *live* religion, I, for one, shall be glad to see it. And if you are so anxious to make me happy, perhaps you'll conclude to give up that half hour's sleep after the rising-bell rings of a morning, so that my breakfast need not be half-spoiled with waiting. I have often begged you to do it; but I suppose that would be too severe a test. *Practical* religion seems rather at a discount with the saints!"

How humbled Lucy Martin felt at her husband's words! Possibly he expected that she would be angry or indignant; she was neither. But with the grieved look of a penitent child she said, "James, I *have* been wrong, all wrong, and have poorly *lived*, as you say, the religion which I have professed. Forgive me, and may God forgive me, too, and help me to do better."

It cost her something to forego those morning slumbers, for she had been a petted child at home, and the foolish indulgence had become a habit not easily broken. But her prompt obedience to a wholesome domestic rule was to be a *test* of Christian character; and she was helped to gain the victory over self, thus showing her unbelieving husband that she, who he knew loved her own ease, loved Christ more. The reformation of this fault led the way to another. She had often annoyed her husband by her extreme cowardice in a thunder-storm. But when she heard him say, "If I expected that death would send me straight to heaven, I don't think I should be so much afraid of it," she felt that her religion was being tested again; and she earnestly strove, by an increased trust in Him who is the same God in the tempest as in the sunshine, to quiet her unreasonable terrors, and not dishonor the faith which proclaims that it shall be well with those who fear the Lord.

These and other conquests over self and sin led her often to the mercy-seat for the grace and strength she needed; and the thanksgivings which she was permitted to return for Divine help gave her such joy and encouragement as made her increasingly happy and cheerful. She still greatly desired her husband's conversion, but she spoke this desire only to the Lord who seeth in secret, and rested her case with him.

All this James Martin saw or suspected. At first he was incredulous that the change would be anything more than the whim of the moment. But he watched closely. And when, day by day, and month after month, he saw that there was a ruling motive in it all, and that his dear young wife was really seeking in love and patient self-denial to please God and win him to the Saviour, he could no longer resist.

"Lucy, you have conquered me," he said, "or, rather, the truth, as you have lived it, is too mighty for my unbelieving heart. If your Saviour will have mercy upon one who has so long defied and resisted it, I will sit at his feet and yours a learner for the rest of my days. And I beg you to pray for me and tell me of the way to heaven."—E. N. H.



PERSEVERANCE REWARDED.



T a recent Sunday-school concert in an Eastern city an anecdote was related to the children, which is too good to be lost. It illustrates the benefit of perseverance in as strong a manner as ever did a Bruce. One of the corporations of the city being in want of a boy in their mill, a piece of paper was tacked on one of the posts,

in a prominent place, so that the boys could see it as they passed. The paper read:—

“ Boy wanted —call at the office to-morrow morning.”

At the time indicated, a host of boys were at the gate. All were admitted, but the overseer was a little perplexed as to the best way of choosing one from so many, and said he :

“ Boys, I only want one, and here are a great many ; how shall I choose?”

After thinking a moment, he invited them all into the yard, and driving a nail into one of the large trees, and taking a short stick, told them that the boy who could hit the nail with a stick, standing a little distance from the tree, should have the place. The boys all tried hard, and after three trials each, signally failed to hit the nail. The boys were to come again next morning, and this time, when the gate was opened, there was but one boy, who, after being admitted, picked up the stick, and throwing it at the nail, hit it every time.


“ How is this ?” said the overseer. “ What have you been doing ?”

And the boy, looking up with tears in his eyes, said :

“ You see, sir, I have a poor old mother, and I am a poor boy. I have no father, sir, and I thought I should like to get the place, and so help her all I can ; and after going home yesterday, I drove a nail into the barn, and have been trying to hit it ever since, and I have come down this morning to try again.”

The boy was admitted to the place. Many years have passed since then, and this boy is now a prosperous and wealthy man, and at the time of the accident at the Pemberton Mills he was the first to step forward with a gift of one thousand dollars to relieve the sufferers. His success came by perseverance.

THE "DEVIL."

"HAT God sends me, I can bear. I have lost my nearest and dearest, and I was not overwhelmed. I know that

'God keeps a niche
In Heaven to hold our idols; and albeit
He broke them to our faces, and denied
That our close kisses should impair their white,
I know we shall behold them raised, complete,
The dust swept from their beauty, glorified,
New Memuons, singing in the great God light.'

Her faith in regard to the well-being of those gone before was perfect, and on account of this faith, and the unselfishness it engendered, was enabled to bear up patiently and bravely.

"But," she goes on, the lines round her mouth deepening, "it is no use talking; I cannot endure what the devil sends."

"As what."

The stocking she is darning falls into her lap. The devil's performances are evidently past specifying.

"Take this, for instance," pointing to the well-mended article; "this is as good an illustration as any. It takes the best part of a day, every week, to properly mend this basket of stockings. I consider that time thrown away. If the devil hadn't meddled with my affairs this and kindred drudgery would have been spared me."

She feels very keenly on this subject, for now the sensitive lip is quivering, and fingers holding the darning-needle twitch nervously.

"You see, my husband was doing well—very well—and we were getting on so nicely; I kept my two servants, and had a house that perfectly suited me, and was easy to take care of; this left me time to read and go out. Well,

this lasted two years, and then the devil stepped in and spoiled it all."

"How?"

"A friend of my husband's got into trouble, and my husband endorsed for him."

"And the friend ran away, I suppose?"

"Oh! no; he died; but John had to pay it, all the same."

"Did the paying of this note relieve the family he left?"

"Well, I guess it did. They are almost as well off as we are now. The widow talks a good deal of her gratitude, and pretends to believe that some time she shall pay it back; but of course this is all nonsense. I doubt if John would touch a dollar of it, unless he knew they were a great deal better off than we."

"Then he doesn't mind the misfortune?"

"No; and that is where the devil is able to hurt me most. When I speak of the children's education, and the numberless sacrifices we are compelled to make, on account of their money, all I can ever get out of him is, 'if we do our best, the children will not want.' And I haven't the slightest idea but he would do it again to-morrow, if circumstances should seem to render it necessary. As if this wasn't enough, six months ago the devil thought it would be nice to make the porter forget to close the hatchway, and my husband walked off about two stories. This made him helpless for three months."

"Well, what did he say about it?"

"He said he guessed the Lord thought he was getting along too fast, and there was a lesson to be learned from a horizontal position" (this with considerable scorn.)

"And he never grumbled?"

"John grumble? Not he!"

"Would it have seemed more of the Lord, and less of the devil to you, had this family you speak of been plunged into helpless poverty?"

"I do not understand you." (Her face now is very rosy red.)

"Your husband helped a worthy man; he died; by this act of kindness this man's children are perhaps kept from the poor-house. You will excuse me if I cannot see one track of the devil's hoof here."

"I never looked at it in that way," she said, after a moment of quiet thought.

"This is just what is the matter with thousands around us; they never look at it that way. They are unable to recognize God's hand in anything save the act of parting soul and body. They refuse to see that God builds characters as a master mechanic builds houses. The pattern is hid with the architect; but to this pattern we must all eventually come. If the timber is not strong enough, more must be hauled; if it does not fit, it must be cut and planed. It is true that some men do not ever make their spiritual foundations secure in this world; but does God throw away the pattern because of their weakness? It is neither destroyed nor lost; nor does God alter it to fit the soul tired of effort and rebellious of discipline. It would be well for progress if we could begin to understand that the devil (so called) of sorrow and deprivation is God's right-hand man."—By ELEANOR KIRK, in *Zion's Herald*.

PLAYING WITH SUNBEAMS.

THERE is a story told of a little child sitting on its nursery floor, playing with a sunbeam that lay athwart the carpet. Now he would try to catch it in his tiny fingers, and laugh merrily at each failure: now he

would bathe his little hands in its warmth and brightness, and then clap them for joy.

Now we meet, sometimes, though not often, with charming grown-up children, who can be happy in the enjoyment of the intangible, when the tangible is wanting. They are the opposites of those characters of whom it has been said that it takes more than everything to make them happy, less than nothing to make them miserable.

Mary Arnold had grown up in an unusually happy home; she never remembered hearing an unkindly word there.

From this home she passed, when quite young, into one of her own, which promised her all the luxuries to which she had been accustomed. But her husband met with heavy losses just as he had won his bride, and she was obliged to live in a humble style hitherto unknown to her. He thought he knew what a sweet spirit she possessed, when the day of prosperity shone for her without a cloud. But he was astonished and cheered when adversity revealed her true character.

"It is going to be very hard for you my poor child," he said to her, "to descend with me into all sorts of petty economies, to which you have never been used. This is the trying part of these financial difficulties; I do not care so much for myself."

"We shall see," she returned with a smile.

"It is easy to smile in advance," he said, in reply to the smile. "But you do not know what it is going to be to you."

It is true she did not know. She had to do with her own hands what she had had other hands to do for her; must make a very little money to go a great way; must do without luxuries; in short, must have that grim and unpleasing master, Economy, sit with her at her table, reign in her kitchen, preside over her wardrobe, and become general Master of Ceremonies. But her friends found her

unchanged by circumstances. When they condoled with her, she would reply,—

“But think what a kind husband I have!”

And she played with this sunbeam, and made herself glad with it, and was so genuinely happy, that it was a refreshment to meet her.

“But it will not last,” said the ravens. “By-and-by, when she has children, and must clothe and feed and educate them, we shall have a new tune.”

Well, the children came, and she had not a moment of leisure. She had to be nurse and seamstress, never got “her afternoon out,” never had her work all done and out of the way; she was industrious, and arranged her time wisely; but she could not work miracles. She felt a great deal of the time, like a straw borne hither and thither by the wind; she could not choose what she would do at such a time, but was forced to tasks, with no room for her own volition.

“Now, then,” quoth the ravens, “we shall hear you complain. You have to work like a day-laborer, and see what miserable wages you get!”

“Miserable wages!” she cried, “why, I don’t know anybody so rich as I am! With such a husband, and such children, and such friends, I am as happy as the day is long!”

“You have a great deal of leisure for your friends, to be sure.”

“Well, I *should* like to see more of them, it is true. And by-and-by, when the children are older, I shall.”

“By that time you will be so old yourself, that your heart will have grown cold.”

“Oh, no; it is too busy to grow cold.”

So she made sunbeams out of her daily, homespun tasks, and went on her way rejoicing.

The ravens were puzzled.

"It must be her perfect health," they whispered to each other.

Time passed; the children grew up, and just as the long-needed prosperity began to flow into the house, the young people began to pass out of it into homes of their own, till father and mother sat at their table alone.

"Now you have spent nearly a lifetime in toiling for your children, and what is the good of it all? As soon as they get old enough to be a comfort to you, they every one of them go off and leave you."

So said the ravens.

"Just what I did at their age!" she replied, cheerily. "Why shouldn't they get married, as well as I? And instead of losing, I have gained children. Whereas I had only six, I have now twelve. And I have plenty of time now to see my friends, to read, to take journeys, and to enjoy my husband."

But now long, long days of ill-health came and laid leaden hands upon her. She had twelve children, but they were scattered far and wide, and could only come occasionally to make her brief visits.

"Very hard!" said the ravens.

"Oh, no! It is such a delight to me that they all got away before this illness overtook me. It would have cast such a gloom upon them to be at home and miss 'mother' from the table."

"But the time is so long! What a sad pity that you are not allowed to use your eyes!"

"Oh, do you think so? I was just thanking God that in my days of youth and health I learned so many passages in the Bible, and so many hymns. I lie here repeating them over, and they are like honey to my taste."

"At all events, it would be a good thing if you could see your friends more."

"I do see them, in imagination. I call in now this one, now that, and make him or her repeat the pleasant affectionate words they used to speak. I am never lonely. And I have other delightful things to think of: books I have read, sermons I have heard, little kindnesses shown me by some who are in heaven now. Sometimes I wonder why, when others are so afflicted, I am passed by."

"Have you forgotten that you have wept over little graves?"

"No; I have not forgotten. I lie and think of all the winsome ways my little ones had, and how tenderly the Good Shepherd took them away in his arms. They might have lived to suffer, or what is far, far worse, to sin. I can't help rejoicing that three of my children are safe and happy. So many parents have ungrateful, wild sons, and foolish, worldly daughters."

"Is it no trial to lie here, bound as it were, hand and foot, and often racked with pain?"

"It would be a great trial if I had not such a devoted husband, and if he were not able to get me everything that can alleviate my condition. But you see I have not a wish ungratified. Think what a delightful room this is! In the summer-time, when the windows are open, I can hear the birds sing, and the voices of little children at their play. In the winter the sun shines in; that cheers me."

"The sun doesn't shine every day."

"No; and that is a mercy, because it is so welcome after absence. On cloudy days I think over the sunny ones, and remind myself that clouds never last forever. It is said that 'the saddest birds find time to sing,' and it's true. Nobody is sad all the time, or suffering all the time."

"You are in the prime of life; others of your age are at work in the Master's vineyard. Doesn't it pain you that you are doing nothing for him?"

"It did at one time. I said, 'All I'm good for is to make trouble for other people, and use up my husband's money.' But it was made plain to me that 'they also serve who only stand and wait.' I might be nothing but a cold flat stone in a sidewalk, made to be trodden on, and fit for nothing else. But if the Master's hand put me there, I ought not to complain that He did not let me form part of a palace instead. We can't all be servants; some of us have got to be served, and I am one of them."

"Do you expect to get well?"

"My physicians do not tell me what to expect. I know that I may live many years; but I also know that I may be called away at any moment."

"How dreadful! Such a life of suspense!"

"I am quite used to it now. At first, I did not know how to act when I found I might die at any moment. But afterwards I reflected that this is true of every human being. I do not expect to do anything it would not be fitting to do, just when the summons came. And it is very sweet to think that I may get my invitation and go, without the grief and commotion my death would have occasioned when my children were all young and needed me."

"But your husband—could you bear to go and leave him alone?"

"My husband is older than I, and I hope he may go first. God has always been so good to us, that I think he will."

"But you could not do without him. You would be left entirely alone."

"Yes. But whenever my heart ached, I could remind myself that it was *my* heart, not his, and rejoice that he was spared this suffering. You see, everything has its good side."

By this time the ravens were exhausted and flew away.

And now let us see whether this faithful sufferer was doing no work in the great vineyard.

Here are six homes where she is quoted every day, almost every hour. Her children have all learned her song as she used to sing it to them in her nest, and they are teaching it to theirs. Cheerful endurance lights up and beautifies every life. And the influences going forth from these lives are beyond computation. And here are friends who love her only less than her husband and children do; who have watched her all her life long, and have borne the burden and heat of the day, in humble imitation of the patience with which she bore hers. They have never heard a murmuring word fall from her lips. They have always heard her wonder what made God so good to her; wonder that, full of discipline as her life was, she had so few troubles. And they have gone away rebuked, with lessons impressed on their memories that should bear fruit she might never see, but should be refreshing in every weary day. And those who were with her when death stole away three cherubs from her heart, knew that it was not stoicism that made her refuse to complain, but thank God that she had had them for a season, enjoyed them while they were hers, and could feel that they were safer, happier with Him than they were with her. Yes, when she wept over the little graves, she caught sunbeams even then, and said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him!"

The truth is, our own hands have more to do with shaping our lives than we fancy. We cannot control Providences, nor ought we to wish to do so. But we can be willing to see the silver lining to the cloud, to "nurse the caged sorrow till the captive sings," to count up our mercies through those dark days when the rain falls, and to never weary, knowing that it never rains always.

And now let us go back to the sick room, which, to its patient occupant, has so long been a prison.

She has grown old, and her strength has greatly declined. She cannot talk much now, and no longer hears earthly voices. But she knows what our eyes say to her when our tongues are silent.

“Yes, I knew you would come to me as soon as you heard of it; so kind of you. Everybody is kind. I wish I had strength to tell you all about it. We had lived together fifty years. He died on our Golden Wedding day. He had been unusually well, and we had laughed together over our young married life. The children were all here, with their children; the house was like a beehive, every bee humming. He said it renewed his youth to see them; I'm sure it did mine. Well, they all assembled here in this room, and the children gave us their presents. Their father told them all about our wedding day so long ago, and every time he stopped talking, to rest a little, I said, ‘Every milestone on our journey marks a mercy; there's a new one. And it will be so to the end.’ Father smiled; for you know I couldn't hear a word he said, but I always did say I had mercies when other people had miseries. At last he had said all he had to say, and Robert—you know my Robert is a minister—Robert knelt down, with his brothers and sisters and the children about him to pray. Father knelt just here by my side, with my hand in his. It was a solemn time. I was with them in spirit, though I could not hear. But when they rose from their knees, father kept on his. We waited a little while, and then Robert and Edgar went and lifted him up. Well, I thought it would be thus. God was always so good to us; he'd slipped away so gently that nobody heard him go.

“Don't grieve for me. The parting will not be for long. My old feet will soon go tottering after. God is

keeping me here a little longer to give me time to tell my friends all about this crowning mercy, and then I shall go. It has been a great shaking; but I think I could hardly have borne to go and leave him alone."

As she faltered forth these words, slowly and at intervals,—her children and a few dear friends standing about her, watching the smile that mingled with her tears,—a sunbeam darted suddenly into the room and lay a 'line of golden light across the bed. She laid her cold hands in it, in the tender way in which she would clasp that of a friend, and said :

"I've had nothing but mercies all the days of my life."

And so she passed painlessly away, "playing with sunbeams" to the last.—*By* MRS. PRENTISS, *in Observer*.

STORY OF FIFTY-TWO PRAYER MEETINGS.

"**T**O be sure," said I to myself, one year ago, the last week in December, "to be sure, this is the evening of our church prayer-meeting, but as I have not been much this year it is scarcely worth while to begin now. I'll just wait until next week, and then begin the year right and go all the time."

Well, it so happened the first evening of the year fell upon the evening of the regular prayer-meeting, and there *was* none. The next evening we had company. Of course, although I wanted to go, I *couldn't*. The next week my neighbor and particular friend, Mrs. Lamb, gave a party. Now Mrs. Lamb is a member of our church, and most undeniably did wrong; but then she is a very dear friend of mine, and I can go to prayer-meeting every week of the year, but it is not every week that I can accept an invitation from Mrs. Lamb, therefore, sorry as I was, I

felt that I must go to the party. The next week Miss Kellogg was here. Now, I work pretty hard and am fond of music, and I need some entertainment, and I really felt it my duty to go there, for Miss Kellogg does not sing every week. You see I was at least excusable. The next week it snowed; the next it rained; the next it was terrible cold, and the next it was warm and thawing, and so wet under foot. The next week Gough lectured, and as I can go to prayer-meeting every week I thought I might just for once go to hear Mr. Gough. The next week I had a headache; the next a dress-maker; and the next, which was the twelfth, a very *hard* cold. So you see I could not go to any the first quarter. The following week it was very dark, and I had no company. The fourteenth I *was* going, but just as I was about to start I heard that our "be-loved pastor" was away, and that Deacon Quickset would lead the meeting. Now I don't like Deacon Quickset. He was so unkind as to say, upon one occasion, that he believed that if I would make *an effort* I might get out to prayer-meeting, as if I were not constantly making *an effort*; and he ought to know that I always go when it is at all consistent. He had better remember that "charity covers a multitude of sins." I am sometimes *obliged* to be absent from prayer-meeting, but I do *not* talk about my neighbors. As Deacon Q. was going to lead the meeting I did not feel it my *duty* to go. The next week, I will confess, I forgot until it was too late. The next week, I started, but was *so* vexed to find that my time was too slow, and I was again late. The sixteenth I did not feel at all well, and the next I went to visit a sick friend. You know it is as much our duty to visit the sick as it is to attend meetings. The next week, unfortunately, there was a wedding in one of the other churches, to which I received an admission card, and as I could go to prayer-meeting

every week, and particularly as the bride's dress was said to be *very* elegant—the trail at least four yards long—I just thought I would go to the wedding. The next week I was very tired ; it was our house-cleaning, and Bridget took it into her head to take this time of all others to get the *ague*, and then the week after that it was too warm to wear my hood, and my new hat was not trimmed. For the next two months I was out of town, and I never *enjoy* going to social meetings where I am a stranger, and so I did not think it best to go. The first two weeks after I returned from my summer tour I was altogether too tired. One's health is of the first importance. The next Wednesday, which was the thirty-fourth of the year, was a happy day for me. Nothing interfered with my regular and established plans, and I went to prayer-meeting. How pleasant it was ! I really think Mrs. Lamb ought to make an effort to go. I mean to speak to her about it. The thirty-fifth week my poor cousin wished me to stay at home with her : she was disappointed about going out herself, and she said as I went out last week she really thought I might. As I did not wish to seem ill-natured, of course I could not refuse ; do you think I could ? The next week there was a heavy thunder-storm, and I am afraid to go out when it lightens. The thirty-seventh, thunder again. I often wonder that Providence should interfere in this way with what really seems to be our duty. The thirty-eighth it was excessively warm, and the thirty-ninth was the only evening in the week when my regular dress-maker could fit my dress. The fortieth week there was to be a Bible agent, or something of that sort, and I *hate* agents. The forty-first there was a festival in another church, and as I am not a sectarian at all, and think it our duty to help one another, I thought I ought to go there. The next week I stayed at home to write

to my dear mother. I went riding the night before, and had an invitation to the theater the next night, and so was obliged to take this night for my letter, though I was sorry. The following week I was obliged to stay at home to finish a tatting tidy I was making for the orphan fair. Surely the orphans must not be neglected; and the next week I was at the fair. I should have gone to *meeting*, but they had put me upon a committee quite against my wish; and the next week suffering from a severe cold, which I had contracted while working for the orphan fair. The forty-sixth I was *rather* obliged to go to another party, though I am principled against such things generally. But, if people will give parties on such nights, what can a person do? The forty-seventh, most unluckily, occurred upon the evening of my birthday. I could not help that, of course, and a person's birthday only comes once a year, and you can go to prayer-meeting any time. So we thought it only right to be social, and we invited a few particular friends. One gets dropped out of society very soon if their invitations are not returned, and I have often heard ministers say that our social duties are quite as binding as our religious ones, or at least something to that effect. The next week I started, but at the gate I met my dear young friend, who is just getting ready to be married, and she was so anxious I would go with her, to give some orders respecting her wedding hat, that I could not refuse, particularly when she said she would trust no one's taste and judgment but mine. Besides, as she will only be married *once* (at least not unless John should die), I suppose it was my duty to go with her. The two following weeks I was just as busy as I could be, for we had decided to have a Christmas tree, and I was getting ready for it. I fully resolved to go after Christmas. Well, the last week of the year had come. I was tired

and blue, and did not feel like going out, and it did seem to me that I had better wait for the New Year again, and then go all the time. But you see I really intended to do so this year; and Mrs. Lamb says that she heard our minister say that God would give us credit for our really good intentions, and that is a great comfort, I am sure, and much more charitable and sensible than that other really profane remark, which I have heard vulgar people quote from some old-fashioned fellow, that "The way to hell is paved with good intentions."—*Packard's Monthly*.

FOR OUR SAVIOUR'S SAKE.

"**C**OME, daughter," said Mrs. Gray, as Minnie appeared in the nursery, "you have had a nice long play since school. Can't you amuse your little sister now while I prepare tea by the time your papa returns?"

Minnie's flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes told of the enjoyment she had had, but there was something in her manner that also told of her reluctance to leave her play just at present; but possessing an obliging disposition, and loving her mother so dearly, she tried to appear cheerful, and replied.

"Yes, mamma, I will."

The slight struggle between duty and pleasure did not escape her mamma's watchful eye, and with joy she smoothed her golden curls, and softly whispered in her ear: "For our Saviour's sake, dear." She then repaired to the dining-room.

"What could mamma have meant!" thought Minnie, as she pondered upon her mother's words, "I am sure I love little sister most dearly"—and she kissed her rosy lips—"and like to please mamma; but how I can be

doing anything for the Saviour's sake, indeed, I cannot tell." So the little girl wisely concluded to ask "mamma" the first opportunity.

Presently tea was ready and the lamps were lighted; and all were so happy in the sweet enjoyment of home and the society of one another, that she forgot the sentence that had puzzled her a few hours before. But when bed time came, and the loving parent bent over her with a good-night kiss, Minnie put her arms around her neck and said:

"Dear mamma, won't you please tell me what you meant by saying 'for our Saviour's sake'?"

Seating herself beside the bed, her mamma said, "Have I not heard my little girl often wish she could do something for Christ?"

"Oh, yes indeed!" replied Minnie; "whenever I read about how Jesus went about doing good continually, I wish, with all my heart, that I could follow his example; but I am only a little girl—what can I do?"

"I wished to remind you, dear Minnie, that this was an opportunity for a little act of self-denial. You must not think, because you are not grown, and are not doing some great act, that you cannot be useful. This world is made up of little things, the little words of kindness, little deeds of love, that help to make our life pleasant and happy; and it is little girls like you that can send rays of sunshine into their parents' hearts by doing cheerfully what they are told to do. As you advance in life, and opportunities for doing good increase, ever bear in mind this sweet motto, and let it be the rule of life:

"Did we but view our daily path aright,
Work would seem a pleasure and our duties light;
Our daily burdens we should meekly take,
With this sweet motive—for our Saviour's sake."

—Church Magazine.

WHY DON'T YOU SMOKE.

"FATHER, why don't you smoke?" said Harry Brown, one evening.

"I did smoke at one time, my son."

"Why did you give it up?"

"Because I could not afford it."

"Were you so very poor, father?"

"No. I was about as well off when I left it off as I am now, I suppose."

"I am sure I don't see why you can't afford it. There is Frank Richards' father, who smokes half a dozen cigars a day, and gives away as many more; but he wouldn't think he could keep such a nice carriage, and so many horses as you have. I don't see why you are obliged to deny yourself anything he can have. I don't think this room, or anything in it, looks much like poverty."

"Well, my son, I think I can afford these things because they add very much to the comfort of those I love. Let us speak first of your things, Harry. I don't think you would take half the comfort you do now if I should sell your saddle-horse. You gratified me very much by the interest you showed in your studies; and the rapid progress you made last term; but you know that close application in school was injuring your health, and you did not regain it until I provided you with a horse. I think your rides have been a great advantage to you. You would be sorry to have me sell your prancing 'Major,' wouldn't you?"

"Indeed I should, father! I can't tell you how badly I should feel to part with him. I never give up my morning gallop unless it 'rains pitchforks!'"

"I will consider it settled, then, that I can keep a horse for you, and because it adds so much to the comfort of

your mother and sister, I can keep a horse and carriage for them. Mrs. Richards is almost as much of an invalid as your mamma, and I think if her husband would consider and give up some foolish expenses, he might keep a carriage for her. She always seems quite delighted when your mamma asks her to ride with us. Now I have wandered a little from the smoking question; do you still wish to know why I give it up?"

"Yes, father, I am quite impatient to hear."

"As I was going down town, one Monday morning several years ago, I saw a little boy sitting by that curbstone trying to pick up the shattered fragments of small wares which he was in the habit of selling up and down the street. He was lame, and any one could see at a glance that he was unable to perform any labor, and as I learned afterwards, he did all he could for the support of a widowed mother. When I saw what a sad plight he was in, I asked him how it had all happened."

"I was looking at my toys," he said, sobbing; "they were set up so pretty on the board. I had more money than usual last Saturday night, and this was my new stock. Mother helped me fix them this morning; now my board is all split to pieces, and this little chicken is the only thing I have left. I was just going round the corner," he said, "when I heard a carriage coming, and I started to hurry across the street, keeping my eyes on my pretty toys, sir, instead of looking to see where I put my feet; I slipped and fell; the board and toys went away over there, and the carriage came around the corner and run right over them; but it didn't touch me a bit. The driver called out, 'pick up your chickens, Bub, when they are big enough to lay, I'll buy some eggs of you,' and drove off, laughing as hard as he could. I could forgive him if he hadn't laughed. Don't you think that was cruel, sir?"

"How much did your stock cost, my young man?" I said.

"Just two dollars, sir."

"How much could you have sold them for?"

"Five or six dollars, perhaps; the regular price would be four dollars, but sometimes ladies and children look down at my lame foot, and say, 'never mind about the change; that is cheap enough.' Last week several ladies gave me money, and would not take anything for it; and that is how I happened to have so much money last week. After paying mother's rent for two weeks, I had enough to buy these things."

"I was just about going into a corner store to make a purchase, when I first noticed the boy's mishap. I had just two dollars in my pocket, which I should have spent for cigars; for that was the purchase I intended to make; and in less than two days they would have been turned to ashes; or, in other words, I should have burned that bill, and probably several others, before the close of the week, if I had not chanced to see the unfortunate little street peddler. I gave him the money (you ought to have seen how pleased he looked), and said to myself, I will burn no more greenbacks while poor widows are dependent upon the earnings of such poor crippled boys. Since then I have never lighted a cigar. The habit was fast getting to be master of me; I was daily treating friends with my Havanas, thereby encouraging the habit in them; and some of them indulged in it to excess; and I believe they were denying their families some of the luxuries, if not the comforts of life, on the plea that they could not afford them, while they were burning money enough every day to buy those little comforts twice over.

"I never knew, until I abandoned the practice, what an appetite I had for the weed; but I was firm in my

purpose, and was never guilty of such extravagance again. I was the means of convincing two young men of my acquaintance of the folly of such a habit, and only yesterday one of them thanked me for it, saying, 'I can really afford a good many comforts for my family now which I should have thought them unreasonable to demand, if I had persisted in that vile habit.' "

"Do you give away all the money it used to cost you for cigars, papa?"

"Yes, Harry; and it affords me more pleasure, spent for the poor and needy, than it ever gave me when I 'puffed' it away. The Lord has prospered us, and I hope I shall cheerfully increase my gifts to His poor every year; but what I call my tobacco fund amounts with interest to several hundred dollars yearly. I call this extra money, and with it I pay the house rent for three poor widows, who with this aid are enabled to live quite comfortably. One is the mother of the lame peddler, whose pitiful story brought me to my senses, and made me realize the sin of turning money to ashes while there was suffering and want around me.

"Poor Jack died of a fever soon after I first saw him, and during his sickness I promised him that if he died, I would not let his mother suffer for want of the comforts of life.

"Now, my boy, you understand why I cannot afford to smoke, and why you ought never to indulge in it, either. I do not see how any man can call himself rich enough to do it. If you ever light a cigar and put it in your mouth, I hope you will be so haunted by the thought of the poor and suffering ones who need that smoking money to buy bread with, that you will solemnly resolve 'never again to rob God's poor for the sake of making a few wreaths of filthy smoke. I could mention a great many more reasons

why you ought not to smoke, but I only promised to tell you why I abandoned the habit. If you ever want to know the other reasons I will tell you, but not to-night.”
—*Zion’s Herald.*

A STORY FOR OLD AND YOUNG.

“**M**RS. R., may Luther go home with me and stay to-night” said little Alice B. to the minister’s wife, who was visiting with her husband and children among the members of his congregation.

The family of which Alice was the youngest made no professions of religion. Mr. B. was a good man *in his way*; that is, he was honest and kind, but he had never become a child of God.

Luther went home with Alice, and a pleasant romp they had. At last the children’s bed-time came. Now, Luther had been taught to kneel down by his papa’s knee, and to repeat his prayer before going to bed. So the artless child, in the absence of his parents, walked confidently up to Mr. B., knelt down, folded his little hands, and in a clear voice repeated,

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take,
And this I ask for Jesus’ sake. Amen.”

So quietly did the child act, that the old man was not aware of his intention until saying “Amen.” He arose, and, going to each, he kissed them good-night.

Little Alice stood in childish astonishment, wondering what the strange proceeding meant.

When the children were asleep the family sat long and thoughtfully. Each seemed to be pursuing an absorbing

train of thought. At length Mrs. B. broke the silence, as a tear sparkled on her cheek, saying, "What a sweet child!"

Mr. B. took no part in the conversation thus started, but leaving his family circle, retired to his bed-room.

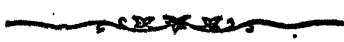
He passed a restless night, and yet, to the oft-repeated question of his wife, "Are you ill?" he only replied, "No."

Morning came, and while breakfast was being prepared, the cheerful "good morning" of the children, and their playfulness, seemed to drive away the singular gloom of kind Mr. B. The chairs were placed, and they sat down to breakfast.

Luther, wondering why they did not have worship, looked from one to the other as they began to eat without the "grace" they always had at home. Thinking, no doubt, that they forgot, he turned his eyes to Mr. B. and said, almost in a whisper, "We didn't pray." It was too much. The old man left the table. Going into his room he fell upon his knees, and wept and prayed. •

Mr. B. and most of his family now stand at the Lord's table with their neighbors, showing how God "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hath perfected praise." Luther did what many sermons and exhortations failed to do, and now he and Alice may both repeat their little prayers by Mr. B.'s knee, while, with his hands upon their heads, he smiles and echoes heartily the Amen; and the family altar is erected and loved.

"Feed my lambs," said Christ, and it may be that the tender lamb may lead the straying sheep into the fold.—
Lutheran Observer. •



THE HIGHLAND KITCHEN-MAID.

THERE was an old Scotch minister named Hector M'Phail who, on a shaggy little horse, rode many a weary mile through wild and dangerous passes, over lonely moors, and past terrible precipices, eager to carry the glad tidings of salvation to his ignorant neighbors.

On one occasion Mr. M'Phail had to attend the meeting of the General Assembly, to which he had been appointed a commissioner from his presbytery. (If you do not understand this sentence, ask some Scotch friend to explain it.) Traveling at the rate of from thirty to forty miles a day, his journey would occupy a full week, and would frequently oblige him to pass the night in the then by no means comfortable inns upon the Highland roads. It was Mr. M'Phail's invariable practice to hold family worship in these houses, and to insist upon the attendance of every inmate. Resting one night at a little inn amid the wild hills of Inverness-shire, he summoned, as usual, the family together for devotional purposes. When all had been seated, and the Bibles produced, Mr. M'Phail looked around, and asked whether every inmate of the house was present. The landlord replied in the affirmative.

"All?" again inquired the minister.

"Yes," answered the host, "we are all here; there is a little lassie in the kitchen, but we never think of asking her in for she is so dirty that she is not fit to be seen."

"Then call in the lassie," said Mr. M'Phail, laying down the Bible which he had opened; "we will wait till she comes."

The landlord apologized.

The minister was peremptory. "The scullery maid has a soul, and a very precious one," he said; "if she was

not in the habit of being summoned to family worship, all the greater was her need of joining them now. Not one word would he utter until she came. Let her then be called in."

The host at length consented; the kitchen-girl was taken in to join the circle, and the evening worship proceeded. After the devotions were concluded, Mr. M'Phail called the little girl aside, and began to question her about her soul and its eternal interests. He found her in a state of the most deplorable ignorance

"Who made you?" asked the minister, putting the usual introductory question to a child:

The girl did not know.

"Do you know that you have a soul?"

"No; I never heard that I had one. What is a soul?"

"Do you ever pray?"

"I don't know what you mean."

"Well, I am going to Edinburgh, and I will bring you a little neckerchief if you promise to say a prayer that I will teach you; it is very short, there are only four words in it—'*Lord, show me MYSELF*;' and if you repeat this night and morning, I will not forget to bring you what I have promised."

The little kitchen-maid was delighted; a new piece of dress was what she seldom saw. The idea was enchanting; the condition was easy; the promise was eagerly given; and Mr. M'Phail, after explaining, no doubt, the meaning and force of the prayer, retired to rest, and next morning resumed his journey.

Mr. M'Phail did not forget the Highland inn and its little servant; but, relying upon the fulfilment of her promise, purchased the trifling present that was to make her happy.

Again, then, we accompany the devoted minister to the wild mountains of Badenoch, and at the close of a mild June evening reach the lonely Highland inn; the white pony, now sleek and shining with metropolitan fare and a whole fortnight's idleness, is safely housed, and the minister, ere he permits supper to touch his lips, summons the household to the worship of God.

Again, however, the little kitchen-maid is absent, and again he enquires the cause. But it is now a different reason that withholds her.

"Indeed, sir," replied the hostess to Mr. M'Phail's inquiry, "she has been of little use since you were here; she has done nothing but sit and cry night and day, and now she is so weak and exhausted that she cannot rise from her bed."

"O, my good woman, let me see the girl immediately," exclaimed the minister, instantly guessing the reason of her grief.

He was conducted to a hole beneath the stairs, where the little creature lay upon a straw bed, a picture of mental agony and spiritual distress.

"Well, my child," said the amiable man, affectionately addressing her, "here is the neckerchief I have brought you from Edinburgh; I hope you have done what you promised, and said the prayer that I taught you."

"O no, sir, I can never take your present; a dear gift it has been to me: you taught me a prayer that God has answered in an awful way; *he has shown me myself*, and O, what a sight that is! Minister, minister, what shall I do?"

After some further conversation, Mr. M'Phail opened up to the distressed girl the great gospel method of salvation, and closed the interview by recommending the use of another, and equally short and comprehensive prayer—"Lord, show me *THYSELF*."

Next morning the minister was once again on his way to his still distant home. But he had "cast his bread upon the waters;" did he ever "find it again after many days?"

Many years had passed since this memorable journey, and the vigorous and wiry minister, who could ride forty miles a day for a week without intermission, was now become an old and feeble man worn out in his Master's service, scarcely any longer "spending," because already "spent," for Christ.

One day his servant intimated that a stranger was desirous to speak with him. Permission being given, a respectable matronly woman was ushered into the study, carrying a large parcel in her hand.

"You will scarcely know me, Mr. M'Phail, said the person, with a modest and defferential air."

The minister replied that he certainly did not recognize her.

"Do you remember a little scullery-maid at——inn, in whose soul you once took a deep interest upon your journey to Edinburgh?"

Mr. M'Phail had a perfect recollection of the events.

"I was that little girl; you taught me two short but most expressive prayers. By the first I was brought to feel my need of a Saviour, by the second I was led to behold that Saviour Himself, and to view Jehovah in the character of a reconciled God and Father in Christ. I am now respectably married, and comfortably settled in life; and, although the mother of a numerous family, have traveled far to see your face, and to cheer you, by telling with my own lips the glorious things which, by your means, the Lord has been pleased to do for my soul."

Before parting with Mr. M'Phail she entreated his acceptance of the parcel she carried, which contained a large

web of linen of her own spinning, made long before, for the purpose of being presented to the blessed and beloved old man, should she ever be permitted to see his face in the flesh once more.

She lived many years, not only a consistent character, but an eminently holy Christian.



KITTY'S REBELLION—A TRUE TALE.

ONE sultry summer's afternoon, some seventeen years ago, little Kitty ran in from her play for a drink of cool lemonade which stood on the table.

"Please mamma?" said her mother, as she turned the glass.

"Kitty tan't say pease," replied the little maid.

Now Kitty had said "pease" a hundred times, and usually delighted in saying everything she was told. She quite reveled in conversational powers for a year-and-a-half old. For the first time in her short life she had taken a notion that she would not do as she was bid. So her mother set the glass down again untasted, and the child ran back to her doorstep as thirsty as before. But it was very warm, and presently the little feet came pattering back, and the thirsty red lips were put up again for a drink.

"Kitty, say please."

"Tan't say pease." So the baby went away thirsty again.

This experiment was repeated perhaps a dozen times in the course of the afternoon, at first playfully as it seemed, but as the wee rebel began actually to suffer from heat and thirst rather than say "please," it became a rather serious question how long she would hold out.

Supper time came, and Pet ran to her high chair.

"Mamma, lift Kitty up?"

"Please mamma, lift Kitty," said the mother, gently.

Instantly the eager little face fell. Baby shook her head—muttered, "tan't say pease," and turned away. Her father and mother and the rest of the children sat down to the table, but who could eat supper while that poor little outlaw stood back by the wall moaning with hunger and thirst! The mother yearned to take her in her arms and give her food and drink; but how could she? The little one knew that one dutiful word would bring her all she wanted, yet she refused to speak it. The question was fairly at issue—should the child obey the parents, or the parents submit to the child? It is an old and common dilemma, and in thousands of households the child carries the day; but Mrs. Hart did not believe God meant that to be the order of the world. So she took her baby to her room, and set before her very tenderly and seriously her naughty behavior. She knelt down and prayed the Saviour to make her good and obedient; but after it all, Kitty could not "say pease," any better than before. At length, distressed and tired out, and fairly alarmed at the little creature, who had not tasted drink since noon, she carried her to her father, and begged him to take the case in hand. Mr. Hart began to talk with the young culprit, playfully, nothing doubting he should soon bring her round. He gave her a great many words to speak which she did all very readily till fatal please came along; that she couldn't do. Year-and-a-half understood very well that to say that was to submit. So he grew serious, and told her that he should have to whip her if she did not mind. Now Kitty and whipping were two things never thought of in the same breath before. She had always been an uncommonly sweet and gentle child, and nobody had ever guessed how much grit

was latent in that soft little bosom. Nothing else would avail, however, and the whipping had to come. Still the baby remained stout-hearted, and far from righteousness.

Feverish and exhausted, with parched lips crying for drink, yet inflexibly refusing to speak the little word which would bring it, she was put to bed in her crib. All through the warm night she tossed and moaned in her unquiet sleep, or woke crying from thirst; but even then, sleepy and miserable as she was she would only sob. "Tan't say pease," when the water came near. For the father and mother that was a night of sleepless wretchedness, relieved only by prayer. They really began to fear that the child would sooner die than give up.

"Oh pshaw! never mind the please; give her drink," many a father would have said. "Poor little thing: I must let the minding go till another time," most mothers would have thought, but Mr and Mrs. Hart did not see it so. If it was like death for a will to yield after eighteen month's growth, what would it be after months and years of indulgence? God had committed to them this soul of His creating, to be trained for Himself; if she could not be made to obey her father whom she had seen, how should she become obedient to her Father in Heaven whom she had not seen? The very fact that her will was so strong, made it the more imperative to their minds that it should be brought under the control of her conscience. They saw what a cruel tyrant it would prove if left to hold sway. The longer the struggle was protracted, the more likely it seemed that the result would be a final one, and the more important that it should be right. Then the other children who had been watching this new phase of family history with a kind of solemn dread—should they learn that the authority they had been taught to revere, could after all be trodden under the feet of a

baby ? It would not do. It had been clearly explained to the little one that it was her heavenly Father's command that she should obey her parents, and that she was resisting His will; the father and mother felt that they had no right to annul His law. So the night wore away, and the morning broke; but it brought no peace to the household, weighed down by the perverseness of its young rebel. She woke worn and almost sick, but stubborn as ever.

Free will indeed ! What a grand awful mystery it is ! How, shrined in a dainty, delicate morsel of flesh, it can look out and defy the world ! Terrible agent of evil ! Glorious worker of good ! Kingliest power in creation !—a sovereign human will ! What wonder heaven and earth contended for little Kitty's will. So they do for every one. Happy the child whose parents steadfastly keep the right side in the conflict.

Kitty found an ally in the morning. A woman in the adjoining tenement, having learned the state of things from the children, came in to plead for her. She assured Mrs. Hart that she was killing the child, that it was downright cruelty to treat her so ; that if she had a little girl, she would never see her suffer when she could help it. All this fell on a sore and aching heart. The mother had already been tormented with fears that the heat, and thirst, and excitement would really be the death of her poor dear naughty little darling. She tried to think up some compromise by which Kitty could be relieved without a sacrifice of parental government. At last she quietly placed a mug of milk in a low chair, and left the little girl alone in the room, while her father and mother watched her unseen.

They saw her come up to the mug and press her hot little hands against its cool sides and begin to raise it to her

thirsty lips, then suddenly she set it down with a piteous look, and went away moaning. It was a cruel battle between Desire and Honor, for such a little heart. Again and again the little creature would come up and look wistfully into the mug of white milk—shake her head mournfully, and turn away. Kitty would not slink out of the difficulty though her parents would let her; she or they must openly surrender. This little display of character made it clearer to them than ever that they should do the child a cruel wrong in helping her to break down the demands of her own conscience.

In the course of the morning Mrs. Hart was relieved to see the family physician drive up to the door. She hastened to tell him the whole story, and ask whether she was risking too much. He advised her to "put it through, the little thing couldn't hold out much longer." Moreover the doctor straightway conceived a little stratagem for bringing her to terms. It was a great treat for any of the children to ride with him, and one to which Kitty had never yet arrived, so that when he proposed to take her this morning, she flushed up with delight, and began to caper about the room in high glee.

"Run ask your mother to please put on your hat then;" said the Doctor.

Instantly the bright little face faded; she had lost all desire to go if there was "a please" to it. So that expedient failed.

It was getting toward noon; nearly twenty-four hours during which Kitty had not tasted food or drink. Persuasion and authority had been exhausted upon her, and still she wandered about the house, a wan, disconsolate little object, often crying, but obstinate as ever. Almost heart-broken to see her so, the mother took her in her arms once more, and carried her to her chamber. Once again she

showed the girl how wretched her willfulness was making herself and all the rest, and how it was grieving the dear Saviour. Then she knelt, and with strong crying and tears implored that blessed Spirit who can melt every heart, to subdue the stubborn will. Suddenly baby threw her arms around her neck, and burst out:

“Pease, pease, pease, pease, pease!”

The grateful mother covered her with tears and kisses, and carried her down to the sitting-room, where she sprang into her father's arms, crying, “Pease, pease, pease!” as if she would never be done. Now she was all radiant with love and peace. The other children came running in to hear how Kitty could say pease. She was ready to hug and kiss everybody. The whole family stood around laughing and crying, to see her drink her cup of milk, and hardly able to let her alone long enough to do it. The house was full of joy. The battle had ended. Right had triumphed. It had been a terrible struggle, but it was once for all; from that day to this Kitty Hart has shown no disposition to resist rightful authority. Her will was not “broken”—that is an ugly phrase—it is good strong will yet; but it was brought under her conscience. It was rescued from being mere willfulness.

These parents had tried all along to make their child understand that to resist them was to disobey her Father in heaven, and that this was the head and front of her offending. As time went on, they found, to their thankful surprise, reason to believe that she had understood it so well that in yielding to them at last, she had also submitted herself to him. Maturer years and new experience deepened and developed her Christian life, but it never seemed necessary for Kitty to be converted after she was a year-and-a-half old. It appeared that the Redeemer had crowned their prayers and fidelity, and ended that

long contest by changing the heart of stone to a heart of flesh, and sending his spirit into it crying, Abba, Father.

“Ah, these cries in child-hearts mean more than we think!

Eternal issues are pending when we little dream of it!—

—By JENNY BRADFORD, in the *Congregationalist*.



• RABBI AKIBA.

“**H**APPY the man who has the God of Jacob for his help, and who trusts in the Lord his God.”

So convinced was Rabbi Akiba of this divine truth, so fully persuaded was he that from the fountain of Goodness no real evil can flow, that even under the greatest afflictions and sufferings he was accustomed to say, “Whatever God does is for our good.” The ancient sages of Israel have recommended us to adopt the same maxim; and they have illustrated it by the following narrative.

Compelled by violent persecution to quit his native land, Rabbi Akiba wandered over barren wastes and dreary deserts. His whole equipage consisted of a lamp, which he used to light at night, in order to study the law; a cock, which served him instead of a watch, to announce to him the rising dawn; and an ass, on which he rode.

The sun was gradually sinking beneath the horizon, night was fast approaching, and the poor wanderer knew not where to shelter his head, or where to rest his weary limbs. Fatigued, and almost exhausted, he came at last to a village. He was glad to find it inhabited, thinking where human beings dwelt there dwelt also humanity and compassion: but he was mistaken. He asked for a night's lodging—it was refused. Not one of the inhospitable inhabitants would accommodate him. He was therefore

obliged to seek shelter in a neighboring wood.—“It is hard, very hard,” said he, “not to find a hospitable roof to protect me against the inclemency of the weather:—*but God is just, and whatever He does is for the best.*” He seated himself beneath a tree, lighted his lamp, and began to read the law. He had scarcely read a chapter, when a violent storm extinguished the light. “What!” exclaimed he, “must I not be permitted even to pursue my favorite study!—*but God is just, and whatever He does is for the best.*”

He stretched himself on the bare earth, willing, if possible, to have a few hours’ sleep. He had hardly closed his eyes when a fierce wolf came and killed the cock. “What new misfortune is this!” ejaculated the astonished Akiba. “My vigilant companion is gone! Who then will henceforth awaken me to the study of the law? But God is just: he knows best what is good for us poor mortals.” Scarcely had he finished the sentence, when a terrible lion came and devoured the ass. “What is to be done now!” exclaimed the lonely wanderer. “My lamp and my cock are gone, my poor ass, too, is gone—all is gone! But *praised be the Lord, whatever He does is for the best.*” He passed a sleepless night, and early in the morning went to the village to see whether he could procure a horse, or any other beast of burden, to enable him to pursue his journey. But what was his surprise not to find a single individual alive!

It appears that a band of robbers had entered the village during the night, killed its inhabitants, and plundered their houses. As soon as Akiba had sufficiently recovered from the amazement into which this wonderful occurrence had thrown him, he lifted up his voice, and exclaimed, “Thou great God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, now I know by experience that poor mortal men are short-

sighted and blind, often considering as evils what is intended for their preservation! But thou alone art just, kind, and merciful! Had not the hard-hearted people driven me by their inhospitality from the village, I should assuredly have shared their fate. Had not the wind extinguished my lamp the robbers would have been drawn to the spot, and have murdered me. I perceive also, that it was thy mercy which deprived me of my two companions, that they might not by their noise give notice to the banditti where I was. Praised, then, be thy name, for ever and ever."—From "*The Jew*," Tract Society.



CHRISTIAN COURTESY.



correspondent of the *Christian at Work* gives the full wing: "While riding in the cars one day with one hitherto chiefly known to me by his reputation as a benevolent Christian gentleman, and of whom I had been conversing with a friend an hour before concerning his unselfish nature and quiet watchful care for others' comfort, I was not surprised, though forcibly impressed, with what seemed to me a very beautiful exhibition of one of these very characteristics."

"Near him he observed a man sitting apparently in a very heavy sleep. In the band of his hat was a railroad ticket marked Smithtown, a station a few miles beyond his own destination. On rising to leave the train, he tapped a man on the shoulder who sat near his sleeping fellow, and asked him if he was going as far as Smithtown. He replied that he was. 'Then,' said he, 'will you wake this man when you get there?' He seems to be in a very sound sleep, and is likely to be carried by his station."

'All right,' was the response, and the good man passed out, unconscious perhaps how beautifully he had illustrated the spirit of true benevolence, as well as leaving behind him the sweet smelling fragrance of a kind act which cannot soon be forgotten by his fellow-traveler, though all unknown to the sleeping recipient.

"All honor to the man who gives gifts of money and influence; he has his reward. But a thousand-fold more to the man who, neglecting not these, despises not small things; verily, he shall have his reward. In many a character there are records of noble deeds begotten of generous impulses, but such frequently lack the fine touches which are to it as light and shade are to pictures, harmonizers and beautifiers of the whole."

LITTLE MABEL.

IN a prayer-meeting in Boston, a middle-aged man rose and said: "I have been thoughtless and impenitent till within a short time, and I will tell you how it came to pass that I am now, as I hope, a disciple of Jesus.

"One Sunday evening I was lying on the sofa in my parlor. My wife had gone out, and no one was with me but little Mabel, a sweet child about six years old, who was making a visit to us, and who sat by the center-table amusing herself with pictures. At length, getting tired of them, she came up to the sofa and began caressing me in her winning childlike way.

"'Uncle,' said she, putting her soft little hand in mine, 'dear uncle, I want you to tell me something about Jesus: Mamma always does Sunday nights.'

"I was struck by the question, but evaded it, talking of something else. But the little creature would not be put off. Again and again she came back with the same request. Uncle, tell me something about Jesus. Finding I did not comply, she at last said, opening wide her clear blue eyes, 'why, you know about Jesus, don't you?'"

"That question awakened thoughts and feelings such as I never had known before. I could not sleep that night; the dear child's wondering words, 'you know about Jesus, don't you?' haunted me through all the long silent hours. I felt that I did not know about Jesus, that I had not wished to know; and a sense of my ignorance and guilt weighed too heavily upon my soul to be shaken off. I was distressed for days. I read my Bible with an inquiring, anxious heart, till at length I found the blessed Saviour, and could say in humility and faith, 'Now I know about Jesus,' that Jesus of whom little Mabel so eagerly wished to hear."

FALLING OUT OF DANGER.

In the pleasant orchard closes,
 "God bless all our gains," say we :
 But "may God bless all our losses,"
 Better suits with our degree.



QUEEN May was hardly more than a year old, but she supposed one year was always. She supposed, also, that the sun and moon and stars were made on purpose for her, and everything on this round earth; especially her mother.

The place where Queen May lived was in the second story of a high brick house; and behind the parlor and

the kitchen and the back hall and the back bed-room, was a lumber and wood-room with a door opening out into the open air. There was no railing or stairway or "nursery gate," and the only thing that ever came through that door was wood drawn up in a basket with ropes and a pully block.

One day when the thermometer had climbed away up among the nineties, and forgotten to come down, Queen May's mother opened all the doors and windows, east, south, west, and north, wood-room door and all, to try and coax any wandering breezes into the house.

Then she went to frying doughnuts like the hunters in the old giant story, while little May sat on the step leading to the parlor sucking her thumb and kicking her blue boot heels.

Pretty soon she saw a nice white cloud floating above the green markel hills just outside the open shed door, and at once she thought she would like to hold it in her hands, and try how it tasted. So she clambered off the step; that was easy enough; all she had to do was to put her hands against the door-frame, turn around and back off. Then, wavering an instant like a butterfly, she toddled away.

"My baby! my baby!" cried her mother, looking out from the pantry with a kettle of hot lard in her hands.

"Gar-gar-gar," cooed the baby, starting into an uncertain little run after she had slid over the back hall threshold. Could the terrified mother never drop that kettle of boiling lard! could she never overtake the dancing feet of the little child!

May looked over her shoulder and screamed with delight to see her mother following so fast and yet so far behind. Just then, Oh how careless of Jacob to drop it! the little tender feet came against a rough knotted stick of wood lying

right across her path, and overtopped the baby, bruising her hands and making a big purple bunch on her soft cheek.

The mother reached her then and sank down beside the little one, all around and over her, holding her close in her arms and thanking God from the depths of her heart for the hindering stick that stayed the baby's feet scarcely an arm's length from the high open door. She looked upon the cruel bruises with grateful gladness and even kissed Jacob for his carelessness.

But little May thanked nobody. She thought some one let dreadful things happen on purpose to trouble her, and she sobbed and sobbed long after she had been soothed to sleep on her mother's bosom.

"The silly baby cannot understand what mercy lay bound up in the rough bark of that jagged stick of hemlock," said the mother, smiling down upon the tear-stained swollen cheek.

But at that very hour the mother was as blind and unknowing as the baby. Something she greatly desired and prayed earnestly for, had seemed just within her reach when a sharp trouble came between—an unnecessary trouble that did not seem to come from the Lord, but from a meddling person who had no right to meddle.

"I could bear it better if it could not have been prevented just as well as not. It was just blundering awkwardness that is inexcusable," said the mother, with heavy pain.

But listen. Those as much above the mother in wisdom as the mother is above the child see how the desire of her heart would have been her destruction, and that with the pity of a father, the infinite Lord permitted the hindering thing to keep her back from greater grief. Be comforted, then, ye whose purposes are broken off, believing that

behind inexorable laws and consequences is the loving hand of the Almighty guiding invisibly but surely in a way that we in our finiteness may not comprehend. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God," just as though each one were the only one in the universe.

Winds wander, dews drip earthward,
Rain falls, suns rise and set,
Earth whirls, and all but to prosper
A poor little violet.

By FRANCES LEE, in the Advance.

MR. POORMAN'S WELL.

MR. POORMAN'S well became sadly fouled. One after another the family sickened. The food was tainted by the water with which it was cooked, and was nauseous to the taste. Matters became so serious that Mr. Poorman said, "I must attend to my well!"

And so he sent for neighbor Strictman, who lived all alone in a little cottage in the wood called the Hermitage.

"Sir," said Mr. Poorman, "what must I do?"

"Do?" cried neighbor Strictman, in stern voice; "do! Why, we must must have all this bad water out."

All day long they wrought with windlass and bucket to draw out the foul contents of the well. When evening came the air was filled with the ill odor, and a great puddle of fetid water lay at the foot of the hill, in which the swine rolled and rested with great zest. But the well still was foul, the food cooked with the water had the old ill savor, and the family continued sick.

Then Mr. Poorman sent over to Legality Square for neighbor Goodwords, and said, "Sir, what must I do?"

"You must fill up the well with sweet water," said Mr. Goodwords.

All day long the teams carried barrels of sweet water from Mr. Goodwords' well to fill up Mr. Poorman's.

When evening came, and the children gathered to cool their feverished lips, they found that the water was indeed purer, but not yet fit for use.

"O, neighbor," said Mr. Poorman. "we have only wasted your good, sweet water, and had our labor for our pains."

Now came Mr. Ritual, who had heard of Poorman's trouble, and offered his advice. This neighbor lived in a fine old house called Ceremony Hall, surrounded with walks and lawns and flower gardens laid out quite daintily in squares and circles and triangles and many other forms.

"Good Poorman," said Mr. Ritual, "let me give some of my plants and flowers to set out around your well. They will have a charming effect, and, I fancy, will draw off all the impurities that trouble the water so."

Mr. Poorman shook his head:—"I cannot see the good of such things, nor how the water down in the well will be helped by triggering out the surface."

"O, husband," pleaded Mrs. Poorman, "do try it; it can do no harm. And it will look well, at all events."

And Lucy, Mr. Poorman's daughter, joined in, "Do, papa, please try it."

So try it he did. And with the help of Mr. Ritual and his boys, the well was planted all around with shrubs and flowers, and over the top were twined bright green vines. It was a pretty thing to look at when all was done. And many of the neighbors and the children's little playmates came to peep through the palings of the fence, and admire Mr. Poorman's beautiful well.

But, alas! the water grew no sweeter, the family were nothing better in health, and the summer was well nigh gone.

"Woe is me! woe is me!" sighed Mr. Poorman, "what must I do?"

And then he went to neighbor Gracious and told him all his trouble.

"Come, friend Poorman," said Mr. Gracious, "we must go down into the well with our shovels. The trouble is not so much with the water, or with the outside, as with the well itself."

And so they did. Many tubfuls of foul stuff were brought up from the very bottom of the well. It was thoroughly cleansed, thanks to the generous help of the kind Mr. Gracious.

And now Mr. Poorman and his family are hearty again, and happy as the day is long; while abundance of healthful water lies cool and sweet in the well, ready and free for all who wish to refresh themselves.

Mr. Poorman's cot stands near the public road. Often weary and dust-covered passers-by stop to ask for a drink. And many is the neighbor, and many is the tired traveler to whom Mr. Poorman has told the story of how good Mr. Gracious cleansed the well when its waters were foul, and so saved his family and himself from their troubles and pains.—*By* H. C. McCook.

LOOKING UP.

DURING Dr. Payson's last illness, a friend coming into his room, remarked familiarly, "Well, I am sorry to see you lying here on your back."

"Do you not know what God puts us on our backs for?" said Dr. Payson, smiling.


"No," was the answer.

"In order that we may look upward."

His friend said to him, "I am not come to condole, but to rejoice with you; for it seems to me that this is no time for mourning."

"Well, I am glad to hear that," was the reply; "for it is not often that I am addressed in such a way. The fact is, I never had less need of condolence, and yet everybody persists in offering it; whereas, when I was prosperous and well, and a successful preacher, and really needed condolence, they flattered and congratulated me."

THE DESERT ISLAND.

 **RICH** and charitable man once wished to make one of his slaves happy. He gave him his freedom, and caused a ship to be fitted out for him with many valuable goods.

"Go," said he, "into a foreign country; trade with your goods, and you shall be well prospered."

The slave departed, but he had scarcely set sail when a violent storm arose and drove the ship on a rock with such force that it broke in pieces. The costly wares sank in the sea, all his companions perished, and he himself narrowly escaped to the shore of an island.

Hungry, naked, and without aid, he penetrated deeper into the country, and was weeping over his misfortune, when he observed at a distance a large city, from which a number of the inhabitants were coming toward him with a great outcry.

"Prosperity to our king!" shouted they, and setting him on a magnificent wagon, they brought him to the town.

He came into the royal palace, where they clothed him in a purple mantle, put a crown on his head and caused him to ascend a golden throne. The nobles of his court surrounded him, fell before him, and swore in the name of the whole community, the oaths of the true and loyal.

The new king thought at first that all of this splendor was a beautiful dream; but the continuance of his good fortune led him to doubt no more that the wonderful adventure was really true.

"I do not comprehend," said he to himself, "what has enchanted the eyes of this remarkable people, that they should make a naked foreigner their king. They do not know who I am, do not ask whence I came, and set me on their throne! What peculiar custom is this in this country?"

Thus he thought, and became so curious to know the cause of his elevation, that he concluded to ask one of the nobles of his court, who appeared to him to be a wise man, the explanation of the riddle.

"Sage," said he to him, "why have you made me your king? How could you know that I had come to your island, and what will finally become of me?"

"Master," answered the sage, "this island is inhabited by spirits. A long time ago they petitioned the Almighty to send them yearly a son of Adam to rule over them. The Almighty accepted their petition, and caused every year a human being to land on the island. The inhabitants hasten toward him as you have seen, and joyfully recognize him as their sovereign; but his reign lasts only a year. When this time has flown and the appointed day arrives, he is deposed of his dignity, he is robbed of his royal ornaments and clothed in ragged garments. His subjects drag him by force to the shore, and put him in a boat built especially for the purpose, which carries him off to

another island. This island is desolate and dreary; he who a few days ago was a mighty king, arrives here in a destitute condition, and finds neither friends nor subjects. No one shares his misfortunes, and he must lead a sad and melancholy life in this desolate country, if he has not spent his year in a prudent manner. After the banishment of the old king the people go to the new, which the providence of the Almighty sends each year without exception, and accept him with the same rejoicing with which they greeted the former one. This, master, is the eternal law of this kingdom, which no monarch during his reign may abolish."

"Were my predecessors then also aware of the short duration of their sovereignty?" asked the king further.

"None of these were ignorant of this law of transiency," answered the sage, "but some allowed themselves to be blinded by the brilliancy which surrounded the throne; they forgot the sad future and passed their year without being wise. Others were intoxicated in the deliciousness of their joy; they did not allow themselves to think of the desert island for fear of embittering the enjoyment of the present time; and so they would stagger like drunken people, till the time was passed, and they were thrown into the boat. When the unhappy day arrived, they each began to accuse themselves and to sigh over their blindness; but it was now too late to better their condition, and they were without mercy delivered to the misery which they had not been willing, through wisdom, to prevent."

This narrative of the spirit filled the king with terror; he trembled at the disaster of the former kings, and wished, if it were possible, to evade their misfortunes. He saw with fright that several weeks of his short year were already flown, and that he must hasten to make all the better use of the remaining days of his reign.

"Wise sage," said he to the spirit, "you have discovered to me my future destiny and the short duration of my royal powers; but I pray you tell me also what I must do if I would avoid the misery of my predecessors."

"Remember, master," answered the spirit, "that you came naked on our island; for just so must you leave it and never return. There is, therefore, only one single way possible to prevent the want which threatens in the land of banishment, namely, that you, yourself, make it fruitful and fill it with inhabitants. This is permitted by the laws of our country, and your subjects are so completely obedient that they will go wherever you choose to send them. Send, then, a number of working people; and let the desert fields abound in fertile acres; build cities and magazines and provide them with the necessary victuals; in a word, make ready for yourself a new kingdom whose inhabitants will receive you with joy after your banishment. But hasten; let no moment go unused; for the time is short, and the more you do toward the building up of your future residence, the happier will be your sojourn there. Consider that the morning of your year is already past; use your freedom like a wise fugitive who would escape destruction. If you disregard my advice, or tarry, then you are lost, and endless misery is your reward."

The king was a prudent man and the speech of the spirit gave wings to his decision and activity. He immediately sent away a number of his subjects; they went cheerfully and commenced work with vigor. The island began to grow beautiful, and before six moons had passed away, cities stood on the blooming meadows. Notwithstanding these, the zeal of the king was not abated; he kept sending more inhabitants thither. The last went thither still more joyfully than the first had done, because

they were going to such a well cultivated country, peopled by their friends and relatives.

In the meantime the end of the year was rapidly approaching. The former kings had trembled at the thought of this moment, but this one awaited its coming with impatience; he was going to a country where he had, through prudent activity, built up an enduring residence.

The appointed day finally arrived. The king was seized in his palace, robbed of his crown and royal apparel, and brought on board of the inevitable ship which carried him to his place of banishment. But scarcely had he landed on the shore of the new island, when the populace hastened to him, received him with the greatest honors, and instead of a diadem whose excellence lasts only a year, they decked his head with a never-fading wreath of flowers. The Almighty rewarded his wisdom. He gave him the immortality of his subjects and made him their eternal king.

* * * * *

The rich, charitable man is God; the slave whom his master sent forth is the human being by birth; the island where he landed is the world; the inhabitants who came joyfully to meet him, are the parents who care for the weeping, naked one. The sage who acquainted him with the sad fate that lay before him is the teacher of wisdom. The year of his reign is the human life, and the desert island whither he was carried, is the future world. The working people whom he sent thither are the good works which one accomplishes during his life. But the kings who went thither before him, without reflecting on the misfortunes that threatened them, are those foolish men who occupy themselves solely with worldly joys without thinking of the life after death; they are condemned to everlasting woe because they appear before the throne of

the Almighty with hands empty of good works. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

MOTHER ANITA.

NO long-robed abbess, with stately step among her nuns and novices—only the daughter of a poor Cape Cod fisherman was this "Mother Anita," whose little story I am going to tell you, translating it from the rough phrase of the rude but kindly people among whom I spent my last summer's vacation, into a few simple words of my own. I do not think that you will call it a sad story; it was not such to me, although I traced it backward from its closing chapter written on marble in the little graveyard:

MOTHER ANITA.

Ae. 26.

Not sad, since death, coming however early, cannot mar the proportions of a beautiful life. The power of the iconoclast stops with outward form—the fair ideal remains forevermore a part of the world's incorruptible treasure.

Anita's sweet, foreign name suited her well. Perhaps its choice had been guided by some subtle mother instinct, springing, arbutus-like, out of the rough soil and amidst the stern snows of circumstance.

Her features were a rare study, combining the beauty and nameless grace for which we do not often look among those whose very life seems a continual war with hostile elements. But Nature, in touching the face of her child to a marvelous perfection, had acted in tender obedience

to the great law of compensation traceable through all the works and ways of God—for Anita was hopelessly hunch-backed. Her deformity was the key to all her life. Doomed to a certain solitude and isolation from the work and play of her sturdy brothers and sisters, debarred from active participation in so many of their interests, the child was thoughtful and sensitive far beyond her years.

Some natures thus shut in bodily infirmity have contracted upon themselves, like the old torture-chamber of the Inquisition. I shudder even now to recollect how once upon a solitary journey, as our stage-coach drove up to the lonely inn which marked a little country station, I saw, standing in the roadside with averted face, a small figure no taller than an ordinary child of five or six years old, but strangely broad-shouldered, I thought, for one so young; and as I still looked curiously it turned about with slow, defiant movement, and a woman's face gazed up at me, dark, bitter, despairing—the black eyes, under their heavy brows, full of the fierce fire which marked the gradual starvation of a soul!

Anita's face expressed a far different history. The sorrowful mystery of her lot sometimes weighed very heavily upon her, but could not shake her simple trust that God who made her remembered and loved her still. The rough fishermen, who often looked after her with tender whispers as she passed, felt perhaps that her brow grew saintly under its crown of suffering, although they would hardly have put the vague fancy in words.

The long, low reach of sandy coast, extending for many miles along the Cape, is always peculiarly dangerous for vessels disabled by a north-west gale; but the oldest sailors could remember no more fatal season than the fall and winter when Anita was eight years old. As many as twenty sail were known to go to pieces in a single dread-

ful day upon the bar outside the harbor of the little fishing village. There was no lack of brave hearts and willing hands to give aid, when aid was possible, but too often human strength and sympathy stood powerless on the shore and saw the pitiless surges engulf their victims, leaving no trace behind.

Sometimes an incoming wave, like some huge feline creature, would toss its helpless prey, in cruel sport, far up the sandy beach, and so it happened that one night a spar, with the form of a woman lashed upon it, was dropped at the very feet of Anita's father, sturdy John Grey. When the piece of sailcloth fastened about her was unwound, a child was found tightly clasped in the arms of the poor dead mother—a little boy perhaps of a year old. John Grey, feeling hastily for the little heart, thought he discerned some lingering thrill of life, and set off for his cottage at a swinging run, leaving his companions to follow more slowly with their sadder and heavier burden.

Anita, who had been standing at the window, straining her eyes into the darkness, and listening in awe-struck silence to the boom of the breakers and the rush and roar of the storm outside, met him at the door with outstretched arms, and a look which seemed to comprehend the situation in a moment. Scarce knowing why he did so, the fisherman laid the child in her arms. A wonderful light broke over her eager face.

"Oh, mother! mother! You can save him!" she cried.

The fisherman's wife, as was needful, was well versed in all the lore of restoratives, and before two hours had passed the poor little waif thus snatched out of the teeth of the sea slept peacefully in Anita's arms. A royal child he was, strong-limbed and beautiful, the blue net-work of veins showing with startling distinctness through the white, transparent skin of his temples. His little garments testi-

fied to the proud and tender care which had been taken of him; but nothing found upon him or his poor mother gave any clue to their identity. The sea kept its secret well, for no other token of the hapless wreck ever came to land.

"Well, mother," said John Grey's gruff but not unkindly voice, one day, "the little un must go to the Asylum, I s'pose?"

"I don't know," was his wife's hesitant answer, the universal mother tenderness looking through her eyes: "may be we could keep it ourselves, John?"

"No!" was the decided reply. "No! the child'll be well took care of there, and you've no extra pair o' hands for baby-tendin', let alone its bein' hard enough sometimes to put bread into the mouths of our own."

Anita rose up from her low seat by the fire, with the baby gathered close to her throbbing heart, and stood before her father. Some great change had come over her; for one brief moment the soul within seemed to wrest from an untoward fate the boon of erect grace for the childish, mis-shapen form. Two sparks like fire glowed in her eyes, and her lips were pressed tightly together.

"Anita! Bless me! what ails the child?"

"Father!" she said, pointing over her shoulder; "father, I am not like other children. I never can do what they do, or have what they have. Sometimes I've thought I wasn't of any use. Give me the baby!"

The fisherman tried to draw her down upon his knee. There was a world of unspoken tenderness in the rough caress.

"Child," he said, "what could you do with it—a little thing like you?"

"Oh! I could take care of him—I know—I know I could!" she answered, her voice falling into a low recitative, the

undertone of resistless emotion. "No one need mind him but me, and I would never, never be tired! Oh, father! father! God gave him to me out of the roaring seas—to me, father! You won't take him away?"

He drew his coarse sleeve across his eyes.

"What do you say, mother?"

His wife was weeping.

"Anita's a handy little thing, and powerful womanly for her age. I guess we might let her try, father."

The unnatural glow faded from the child's face, the little strained figure relaxed, and she sank down in her place, sobbing hysterically. As her tears fell on its forehead the babe turned uneasily; but at its first low moan Anita was quiet in an instant. A marvelous expression of age and self-reliance came into her face. She held the child closer, and commenced a low, crooning lullaby.

The fisherman rose and went out, beckoning to his wife.

"Mother," he said, "I've a notion it's God's work for the child—leastways, I can't gainsay her!"

Months were counted into years, and there was none to interfere with Anita's strange adoption. The boy—"Rescued" was the odd, old-fashioned name she gave him—developed into wonderful beauty. Anita seemed to have no life but in him; at home and among the neighbors she came to be known only as "Mother Anita," or "The Little Mother." So proud of him she was! From the first she seemed to have accepted it as a quiet certainty that he was fashioned of a finer material, and for a higher sort of life, than she had known. She was never quite content without him at her side. How much she suffered as he grew old enough to be taken sometimes with her father and brothers in the boat, was hinted by the red glow in her cheeks, and the restlessness of every look and motion, till she had him safely back again.

City people, who began to find the little village pleasant for a summer's fishing and bathing, were quick to make friends with the deformed girl whose spiritual face, radiant with love for her beautiful young charge, attracted them like some rare picture. Many offered her gifts of money, which she declined with gentle gratitude, asking for books instead—always adding, apologetically, "to teach *him*, you know." So it happened that a various library accumulated by degrees in her little chamber. As she read and studied, glimpses of a new world opened before her, but as the little that she learned only hinted at what she could never know, the sad conviction forced itself upon her that she could, after all, never be her boy's teacher.

The great wrench of her life came when Rescued was twelve years old. Judge Thorne, with his wife and little daughter, came down to the sea-shore, their hearts sore for the recent loss of their only son. * The strong resemblance of Rescued to her dead child quite overcame Mrs. Thorne, as she chanced to see him, for the first time, playing on the beach; and when his strange history was told her, she begged her husband to take him for their own.

When Judge Thorne preferred his request to old John Grey, he shook his head.

"Not but 'twould be the makin' of the boy, Judge Thorne, but you see my darter—Why! the little mother'd grieve to death if Rescued should be took away!"

But as the Judge still urged, he said at last, "There's no use talkin'; but if you'd like to hear what she'd say herself, I'll call her in, for there she comes!"

Anita came in, and Judge Thorne stood half abashed before the quiet dignity which comported so ill with the small, deformed figure. Having once heard Anita speak, one must respect too much to pity her. Unconsciously he dropped the manner with which he had spoken to her

father, and in a few broken, heart-felt sentences, plead his doubtful cause.

Anita grew deadly pale, and her finger-tips, resting on a table beside her, were white with pressure, but otherwise she seemed calm and quiet, never once taking her eyes from Judge Thorne's face reading him through and through.

"I will answer you to-morrow," she said, when he had done; then she turned away and went up to her own room. What fierce conflict she waged there with her own heart we can never know, but her unselfish love conquered at last.

With the autumn the little Rescued went to his new home.

"You shall come to us often, Anita," Mrs. Thorne had said, but the quiet answer was, "No, Mrs. Thorne, it is not best—it would be all the harder to leave him again, and my place is here."

The little mother's face grew somewhat paler and thinner; but there was no other outward change, except that the wealth of care and tenderness which she had lavished for years upon the one beloved object, was distributed now, to bless and cheer the many.

It was she who gathered the little children of the village together into a school, which she taught, not so much from text books, as from shells and stones and flowers, planting in their young hearts that seed of love for God, and all that He has made, which would spring up by-and-by in a plentiful harvest of faith and right living. It was she who read the Bible to the old; who smoothed the pillow of the sick; who wept with the widow and the orphan; whose sweet voice put in words the last prayer of the dying.

She herself sickened at last, wasting slowly, but surely.

"I don't think we'd ever rightly known how much she suffered all her life," old John Grey said to me as we sat together in the church door one Sabbath afternoon after service, looking toward the grave-yard, whose simple stones were shining in the prophetic glory of sunset. "She was so cheery and patient-like, never talkin' of herself. It was so to the last. There was only one thing she longed for after she felt that she couldn't live, and that was to see the boy again. She hadn't seen him for six years, for the Thornes had been in England for that long. As she got weaker she mourned the more. 'Oh!' I want to be willin,' she used to say; 'but if it could be God's will to let me see him once more!'"

"There was a heavy storm the night she died. The wind howled around the old house, and we could scarce hear one another speak for the noise of the sea. I never can forgit how she looked as she lay there a listenin', with her white face and her eyes so big and bright. All to once she spoke: 'It's eighteen years ago to-night,' says she, 'in just such a storm as this, that God sent my boy, and while the words was in her mouth I heard a noise of wheels outdoors, and a stamping on the steps, and the kitchen-door opened and he come in—man-grown and tall and stout—a likelier lookin' lad I never laid my eyes on, but the same Rescued, after all!

"'How is she?' he whispered; 'we landed last week, and it's only yesterday I heard through Jacob Thompson that she was sick.'

"I held up my finger for him to speak lower, but it was no use—she'd heard him, and she started up in bed, with her lips apart and her eyes on the door. I beckoned to him then, and he came in. 'Oh little mother!' he just sobbed, and she put her two arms around his neck, without a word, and he laid her down gently. Oh, Sir, you

never saw such a face! You know how the Good Book says they saw Stephen's—well, hers was like that."

"Somehow words didn't mean much then, and we all kept still. He sat by her and held her hand till near midnight; then a change came over her. Her eyes had an odd look, and we could see she wasn't with us any more. All at once she raised up. 'He's wakin' up,' she said, 'the precious lamb!' and then she began to sway herself back and forth and to sing the little song she used to rock him to sleep with:

'Sleep, little one, like a lamb in the fold,
Shut from the tempest, safe from the cold,
Sleep, little one, like a star in the sky, [by!'
Wrapped in the cloud while the storm-wind sweeps

"Her voice grew fainter and fainter, and sweeter and sweeter, and so she died."



GOING TO HEAVEN BY RAILROAD.



T a station a little girl came aboard, carrying a little bundle under her arm. She came into the car and deliberately took a seat. She then commenced an eager scrutiny of faces, but all were strange to her. She appeared weary, and, placing her bundle for a pillow, she prepared to try to secure a little sleep. Soon the conductor came along, collecting tickets and fares. Observing him, she asked if she might lie there. The gentlemanly conductor replied that she might, and then kindly asked for her ticket. She informed him that she had none, when the following conversation ensued. Said the conductor: "Where are you going?"

She answered, "I am going to heaven."

He asked again, "Who pays your fare?"

She then said, "Mister, does this railroad lead to heaven, and does Jesus travel on it?"

He answered, "I think not. Why did you think so?"

"Why, sir, before my ma died she used to sing to me of the heavenly railroad, and you looked so nice and kind I thought this was the road. My ma used to sing of Jesus on the heavenly railroad, and that He paid the fare for everybody, and that the train stopped at every station to take people on board; but my ma don't sing to me any more. Nobody sings to me now, and I thought I'd take the cars and go to ma. Mister, do you sing to your little girl about the railroad that goes to heaven? You have a little girl, haven't you?"

He replied, weeping, "No my little dear, I have no little girl now. I had one once, but she died some time ago, and went to heaven."

Again she asked, "Did she go over this railroad, and are you going to see her now?"

By this time all in the carriage were upon their feet, and most of them were weeping. An attempt to describe what I witnessed is almost futile. Some said, "God bless the little girl!" Hearing some person use the word "angel," the little girl earnestly replied, "Yes, my ma used to say I would be an angel some time."

Addressing herself once more to the conductor, she asked him, "Do you love Jesus? I do; and if you love Him, He will let you ride to heaven on his railroad. I am going there, and I wish you would go with me. I know Jesus will let me into heaven when I get there, and He will let you in too, and everybody that will ride on His railroad—yes, all these people. Wouldn't you like to see heaven, and Jesus, and your little girl?"

These words, so innocently and pathetically uttered, brought a great gush of tears from all eyes, but most profusely from the eyes of the conductor. Some who were traveling on the heavenly road shouted aloud for joy.

She now asked the conductor, "Mister, may I lie here until we get to heaven?"

He answered, "Yes dear, yes."

She then asked, "Will you wake me up then, so that I may see my ma, your little girl, and Jesus? for I do so much want to see them all." •

The answer came in broken accents, but in words very tenderly spoken, "Yes, dear angel, yes. God bless you!" "Amen!" was sobbed by more than a score of voices.

Turning her eyes again upon the conductor, she interrogated him once more:

"What shall I tell your little girl when I see her? Shall I say to her that I saw her pa on Jesus' railroad? Shall I?"

This brought a fresh flood of tears from all present, and the conductor kneeled by her side, and, embracing her, wept the reply he could not utter. "At this juncture the brakesman called out H——s!" The conductor arose and requested him to attend to his (the conductor's) duty at the station, for he was engaged. That was a precious place. I thank God that I was a witness to this scene, but I was sorry that at this point I was obliged to leave the train. •

We learn from this incident that out of the mouth of even babes God hath ordained strength, and that we ought to be willing to represent the cause of our blessed Jesus, even in a railroad coach.



THE INVALID.

NOT a child's face certainly, nor yet a woman's, for though it suggested both, there was something in it that transcended any face of child or woman that I had ever seen, a divine peace that, won through anguish, had blossomed into joy. Such a face as the martyrs might have worn in the intervals of torture, when the remembrance of suffering was swallowed up in the consciousness of sustaining love. Small and delicate in outline, it was neither emaciated nor cadaverous, but luminous from a soul unfaltering in its trust, securely anchored on something stronger than itself. If I had had any thought of acting the part of helper to one in need, of offering sympathy in the accustomed phrases to one long debarred from the joys of active life, shut in from the beauty of the outdoor world, it died out in the presence of that face, was utterly forgotten before the marvel of those clear eyes that shone with a light as steady and assured as the light of stars. Sick-room platitudes had no place at that bed-side, and condolence would have been as incongruous as though offered on the loss of his means, to one who had invested all that he had in a field that contained an inexhaustible mine of gold. In the presence of this invalid girl, I recognized something that made intellectual attainments meager, wealth an impertinence, and even good health a thing to be carried modestly, not flaunted in the face of the world, as one of the best things life has to give.

"I am glad to see you," she said smiling, and giving me a hand exquisitely small and delicate. "I have wanted to see you, but am compelled, as you see, to wait for people to come to me." No queen could have received a guest

with more perfect self-possession, for to this pure soul suffering had been a teacher, not only of every Christian grace, but of that tranquillity and self-poise that is the secret of the best manners.

"I am afraid you find the days very long," I said, clumsily broaching the very subject I had meant to avoid.

"Oh, no," she answered cheerfully, "not too long, I usually sleep late. The pain will not let me sleep much during the night, but towards morning I fall asleep, and often do not wake till nine or ten; then sister gets me up and I have my breakfast, and that uses up a couple of hours, and after that I read a while, and then I am so tired that I am very glad to get back to bed, and by the time I am a little rested it is night again; no, the *days* are not long."

"And the nights?" I asked.

"Yes, they are long; but I wouldn't mind if the pain would only let me keep still, so that sister could sleep. I don't know why it is so much worse at night, but sometimes I can't help groaning, and then she is awake in an instant, and that is so hard for me to bear, for I know how hard she works all day, and then being awake so much at night is fairly wearing her out," and here the eyelids fell, and a tear or two stole from under them and rolled down the pale cheek. "You see she has had the care of me so long, and before that, of mother and grandmother, her whole life has been given to taking care of the sick."

"How long have you been confined to your bed as you are now?" I asked.

"Fifteen years."

I suppressed the exclamation that rose to my lips, for the words were pronounced quite simply, as one would say that he had lived in a particular house or neighborhood fifteen years. She was little more than a child when the

accident occurred that took her away from all the interests and activities of life, and consigned her, an incurable invalid and helpless cripple, to her bed. During all these years she had been a constant sufferer, and some hours out of every twenty-four were hours of agony, and yet she had no word of complaint or repining on her own account, and the only tears she let fall were for the patient life wearing itself out in care and tender solicitude for her.

What she could speak of so tranquilly, I found it impossible to think of with composure. I took my leave somewhat hurriedly, and on my way home, listened to a story of suffering, self-sacrifice, and unwearied devotedness that is rarely equalled. On the older sister, and a brother whom I did not see, had devolved the care of a decrepit grandmother, invalid parents, and this helpless younger sister. With no complaints, quietly and as a matter of course, the burden had been assumed. It involved the surrender of every personal hope and ambition. The brother, like other young men of the place, had longed to go West and make a place and a home for himself, but he could not be spared; the time never came. Early and late, with poverty ever pressing harder and harder upon them, he toiled for those dear to him. One by one they passed away, the aged grandmother, the invalid father, the insane mother, till only bed-ridden Jenny was left. Sorrow and privation had only brought them closer to each other. To remain together, to love one another, and to bear as they best could the burdens that life imposed, seemed all that was left them. Incessant toil, anxious days, sleepless nights, are the lot of the two care-takers. Isolation and acute suffering, from which death alone can give release, is the lot of the invalid. But while one sister has grown still as if already in the presence of death, and the sad lips are shut closely as if to keep back the sobs, the face of

the other is luminous with love, beautiful with the peace that passeth understanding.

But for the hope of immortality, what would life be to such as these? May all helpful influences minister unto them, and the Gate Beautiful open to receive them into the temple of infinite love and heavenly compensations.—

By CELIA BURLEIGH, in Woman's Journal.

DID AUNT BAGLEY KNOW?

“**S**ECOND and third chapters of Revelation, the 7th, 11th, 17th; 5th, 12th, and 21st verses.”

It was a long text for a July Sabbath, with the mercury away up and ethics away down, and such a billowy ocean of fans surging between!

Sadie Brooks caught her breath with a little gasp, exchanged her bit of carved ivory for a huge palm-leaf, and settled herself resignedly into the limp folds of her organ-dy; her thoughts dropping simultaneously down among the ruffles and puffings and turquoise-blue ribbons, wilting under the force of atmospheric pressure.

“He that overcometh.” Again and again the speaker repeated the words, each time with the accompanying promise new and wonderful.

Sadie's thoughts went out suddenly after him, catching only that first clause: “He that overcometh.” That suggested wide fields, breezy mountains, a flash of arms, a glitter of epaulets, a roar and rumble and rush. Individually, it bespoke steady nerve, resolute eye, firm-set lips, strong active wills. What had poor, panting, perspiring mortals to do with it, while Fahrenheit clung to ninety in the shade?

Or did it mean just those last six days of muggy, sticky, dusty, suffocating hotness? Did it mean leaving out all the impatience, uncharitableness, indolence, selfishness, and downright crossness that will get uppermost with the mercury? Inward and backward went Sadie's thoughts, with the one word for a touchstone. How about the fretting when things went wrong, the scoldings lavished on never-go-lucky Bob, the snubbing of poor little Fib, who would ask questions by the dozen, the general out-of-sorts feeling, which one didn't particularly care to overcome anyway? How about doors carelessly left open, giving ingress to one of the Egyptian plagues and making you wish the other nine could be visited upon the offender? Was the overcoming to go straight on, through thick and thin, cold and heat, flies and dust, and all?

If it should? Sadie caught a glimpse of the light and glory, such as haloes every victory, be it ever so small; and, with a sudden longing for immediate possession, looked up to the speaker again for the needful teaching.

But the speaker had chosen for his theme those glorious promises, opening before his hearers the fullness of their meaning, and enjoining soul-culture as the necessary condition of entering this God-given inheritance.

Doubtless many a hungry soul was fed; but it seemed like empty husks to Sadie. The text had suggested to her not the end, but the means. She wanted help, not incentive; and, coming down from spiritual heights to every-day details, behind the big palm-leaf, she went on imagining what a life would be, full of true overcoming—one grand, continuous tragedy, with no postponement on account of the weather. Heat overcame people sometimes. Mightn't there be moral sunstrokes as well, to avoid which they must always be conjugating that one verb in the active voice.

"He that overcometh!" It was text, sermon, application, all to Sadie; and the help she had vainly sought from the pulpit, she found in two lines of the closing hymn:

"Who in the strength of Jesus trusts,
Is more than conqueror."

It wasn't strange, that, dwelling on the words, she should lose time in the melody; but it was vexing—the queer little smile Dora Guernsey sent over to her, in consequence. Miss Guernsey boarded at the Wallumpset House, the aristocratic hotel of their rather aristocratic village, getting a summer's worth of country air, country living, and country admiration. It wasn't easy for Sadie Brooks, the acknowledged leader and favorite among the young people, to admire Dora Guernsey, who bade fair to out rival her; and, considerably disturbed, Sadie went down the aisle, and through the church door, passing with just the coolest bow her dear friend, Lou Rogers, who was intending to walk home with her, as usual. Lou was getting quite too intimate with the new Miss Guernsey for Sadie's liking. Besides, she wanted to go on with her thinking, planning how through the week she would use those three words, something as Uncle Ben used fresh, dewy grape leaves of a morning, lining his hat with them, to ward off the fierce sun-heat. To her mind, just then, heat marshalled and led all other foes.

So, when Monday morning dawned deliciously cool, and the household wheels ran smoothly through the steam and suds of a week's wash, and Fib neglected to use interrogation points altogether, and Bob brought her a bunch of pond-lilies, with no worse mishap than a tumble head over heels into the water, the elder sister well-nigh forgot there was to be any tragedy at all. Quite forgot it, when Mrs. Davenport sent over an informal invitation.

to an impromptu croquet party for that very evening. "The last of Sidney's being at home," the little note said, "To-morrow morning he would start for the Adirondacks, and only stop for an hour or so on his way back to Yale. So it was really his good-bye."

Sadie congratulated herself on the freshly ironed organdy; the new crepe tie and sash of serpent-green; the jaunty embroidered jacket, with its sea-weed pattern; and (could anything be more charming?) those lovely pond-lilies, to shine pure and star-like from the plaited coronet of soft brown hair, to fasten her jacket, and to be looped in with her sash where it caught up and confined the folds of the graceful overdress. A moment her fingers lingered among the creamy blossoms, filling a shallow glass dish on the piano; then, turning suddenly to the mirror, she laid a cluster of them in the tangle of wavy brown hair, with its faint shimmer of gold wherever the sunlight touched it.

There may have been vanity in the little flush creeping over her cheek, as she noted the effect; and as she sat down to the piano and hummed softly through the beautiful solo, "Consider the Lilies," which Sidney Davenport had brought her the night before, there may have been sin in the half-conscious wish that she could have sung it that evening, with the breath of those dainty flower-lips mingling in the melody, and bearing witness that not alone "in the field" things of beauty "toil not," but are divinely cared for. I do not say how much of evil motive mingles with the pure, sweet thoughts wandering in and out of a young girl's mind, weaving her little plans for worldly triumphs, her little longings for worldly successes.* But I do think the sweet words and the fragrant blooms helped for Sadie the hint of an unwritten sermon. We shall see. She had just finished dressing that evening,

all save arranging her lilies, when Lou Rogers and Dora Guernsey came in up-stairs, as Lou was privileged to do, after a couple of hair-pins. Lou never had any spare ones.

"Oh! the elegant, superb, exquisite beauties!" cried Dora, bending over the dressing-table, where stood the shallow glass dish with its treasures. "And to think of their wasting their sweetness here, when they are exactly what I want. Smilax and tea-roses are dreadfully common. I may, mayn't I, Miss Brooks?" And without waiting for an answer, she drew them out of the water, reached for a towel to dry the soft porous stems, and coolly set to work, fastening them among the massive coils of her dark braids, upon the low bertha, and here and there among the cloudy mistiness of the black Hernani, puffed and ruffled and hitched to the last degree of bewilderment.

"There!" and she turned round expectantly, a very queen, in what was to have made a charming little sea-nymph of Sadie.

Surprise at first, and then mere courtesy kept the latter silent; though to be sure Dora gave her no chance to dissent, talking right on, as she opened her own box of flowers:

"Can't you use some of this smilax, Lou? And these tea-roses, it's such a pity to have them wasted. I don't dare ask Miss Brooks what she was going to wear, for fear it was these magnificent lilies; and she'll think I'm dreadfully selfish; only she must see how exactly they suit my style, and anything looks about so-so in light hair. Oh! Lou, dear, I've left my handkerchief at your house." And in another moment Sadie was alone, rubbing a patronizing kiss from her hot cheeks.

There was an ominous sparkle in her blue eyes as she tossed the smilax and tea-roses into a drawer, shutting the same with an indignant thud. Six years earlier in life she would have had a good cry over the disappointment. Six years before that she would very likely have charged desperately upon the invading foe and recovered the plunder. At eighteen she was denied both these methods of relief; but the tears and the passion were all there—concentrated, generating a heat to which Fahrenheit has no corresponding degree. And if the gentle mother, proffering a spray of glossy ivy leaves for the plain brown braids, was surprised at its being hastily and rather sharply declined; if poor Bob stole away broken-hearted, with the big bunch of scarlet poppies he had picked for the same purpose: if sleepy Fib was most emphatically snubbed for asking “What for Say didn’t make her head pretty?” and anything but a serene face answered Mrs. Davenport’s greeting, it was because our poor little *tragedienne* had forgotten her part, and could not as yet hear the softly whispered cue.

They were all gathered around Dora Guernsey, Sidney Davenport among them, when she entered the parlors; and what was scarcely a tangible slight added itself to her previous injury, and made her stiff and unsocial—“Dull as a poker,” Sue Sherry said, when she persisted in staying by herself and turning a half-lighted kaleidoscope, instead of listening to Miss Guernsey’s comical stories.

But there in the corner alone she caught the little cue: “He that overcometh.”

Did it mean that, too—an unresisting endurance of “offenses which must needs come,” and no wish of “woe to him [or her] through whom the offence cometh?” Must she put it quite out of her thoughts, this little wrong, and the pleasant little triumph of which she had been robbed?

Would it be overcoming willingly to be second where she had always been first? Were these "least things" in the same Divine hands with the lilies?

There was a resolute putting away of malice, a determined putting down of self, and then Sadie joined the group on their way to the croquet-ground, where soon the click of the mallets and bursts of laughter chimed most harmoniously with the light and music and fragrance of Chinese lanterns, dripping fountains, and bordering flower-beds.

It was hard work for Sadie; but through the whole game not a hasty word or impatient look betrayed the bitter thoughts that would come with every gleam of the lilies in the dark braids of Sidney Davenport's partner.

"*I will overcome. I will not be vexed with her,*" she said to herself again and again, trying to admire way down in her troubled heart the telling strokes of Dora's mallet.

But it would not be stilled—that tumult of angry feeling; and when the gay party went back to the house for refreshments and music, Sadie lingered a moment to conjugate once more her troublesome verb. And Mrs. Davenport, passing her, paused to say: "I do wish we could have had 'Consider the Lilies' sung to-night; but, of course, you haven't had time to learn it. You know I have never heard it, and Sidney thinks there is nothing like it. Of course, no one here has seen it, however," she added moving on.

Sadie knew that Dora Guernsey sang "Consider the Lilies." Some one had spoken of it at the Conservatory, in town. But Mrs. Davenport would never think of asking her. Well! The real struggle began then. Before it had been simply defensive; now it was aggressive. To give a triumph voluntarily is more than letting it be taken

passively. "He that overcometh!" Sadie sprang after Mrs. Davenport.

"Miss Guernsey sings 'Consider the Lilies.'" She will be glad to sing it, Sadie was about to say, with the least bit of sarcasm in her tone; but she checked herself, and at Mrs. Davenport's request, crossed the room with a petition from that hostess that Miss Dora would favor them with the song in question.

I think just the tiniest curve of surprise arched Miss Guernsey's brow—she had seen the music upon Sadie's piano—and then the eyelids drooped affectedly, as Sidney Davenport, with a significant glance at the lilies she wore, led her to the instrument, leaving Sadie a looker-on in the little drama she had pictured to herself, to work out her little tragedy, but also to be—"more than conqueror." Somehow, she had grown suddenly strong. She joined most sincerely in the applause, following Dora's faultless rendering of the beautiful composition. Heartless and mechanical she felt it to be; but the little "feel" was hidden away unspoken, a twinge of envy shut with it, and Sadie enabled very cheerfully to furnish accompaniments for the further display of Miss Guernsey's vocal powers.

There was nothing assumed about the light-heartedness with which our heroine helped on all the after fun and frolic of the evening. There was a little ache perhaps—wounds received on battle fields have that long after peace is declared—and one of the lilies had changed hands again. But even that couldn't take away from Sadie Brooks the happy consciousness of a victory won, albeit another had been crowned in her stead.

Out on the piazza Aunt Bagley was reviewing the last Sabbath's discourse:

"Them promises meant something to the martyrs, a going through fire an' sword away up to the Revolution—

ary, when the men fit and women pinched and made their clothes out of nothin'." It did then to talk about souls being edicated an' growin' strong, strugglin' with difficulties; but I should like to know what overcomin' there is in these times, when you're thought a little more of for belonging to some sort of a church, and everything slips along gay and hifalutin' with parties, an' panyers, an' posies. Our young folks don't know the fast thing about overcoming. If it depends on the fightin'"—and Aunt Bagley shut her lips sententiously—"they never'll inherit the promises. Why, they don't even know what overcoming means."

Didn't Sadie Brooks?

"He that ruleth his spirit." Did Aunt Bagley know the meaning of that?

—oo—

POOR JACK.

A gentleman going late one evening from St. Martin's Lane to Bloomsbury street, London, saw a number of ragged lads—beggars, thieves or both,—standing in a knot, talking, laughing, and swearing. Just as he passed, one of them shouted some jeering piece of impertinence after him. He turned round and said kindly to the one who had spoken, "Did you speak to me, my boy?" He shambl'd a little away, muttering, "No, sir."

The gentleman then stepped into the middle of the dirty group, saying, "Boys, listen to me: I have something to tell you—a short story."

They were all silent in an instant; and then, in the plainest and shortest manner, he told them of God's pity and love for them. After which, he spoke to them of the

life and sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. He said nothing of punishment or of hell. He only tried to tell them all about Jesus, using the words of the Bible as much as possible. As he told them how weary and tired and hungry the Saviour often was, all was silence. Then, as the end came nearer, trying to make the last awful scenes seem true to them, he heard an occasional shuffle, as one and another pushed nearer to hear how the good Lord had suffered for him. They listened with faces of awe, dirty enough but solemn, to hear of his agony and bloody sweat, his cross and passion; and by and by he heard—and God heard too—little vulgar sobs* of uncontrollable emotion. Dirty hands wiped dirty faces; and their round eyes never moved from his lips as he told them that now, while he spoke to them, Jesus was standing amongst them, and that he loved them just as much as when he died on the cross for their sakes. The story ended, no one spoke. Suddenly the gentleman said, "Now, lads, he loved us very much: ought not we to love him? Who loves him? Let every one that wishes to love him hold up his hand. I do;" and he held up his. They looked at one another. Then one held his up. A little mass of rags, with only one shoe, and a little grimy face, half hidden in a shock of hair, scarcely confined by an old battered hat with no rim, held up his dirty, little hand. It was a touching sight. One and another followed, till all the hands, just twelve in number, were up.

The gentleman then said, slowly, "You all wish to love him. Now, dear boys, hear what he says to those who love him. 'If you love me, keep my commandments.'" Then, going straight up to him who had first held up his hand, the gentleman, holding out his, said, "Shake hands on it, that you *will* promise me to try to keep his commandments." At once the little black hand was put in

his; and the gentleman shook it hard," saying, "God bless you!" So he went round to all. He then gave them three shillings, to be shared amongst them for bed and bread, and said, "Good night." So they parted.

About three weeks after this, the same gentleman was going under St. Clement Danes' archway. A little ragged shoeblack was kneeling at one side. After the customary "Clean your boots, sir?" the boy made a dive forward, and stood grinning with delight, right in front of the gentleman and his friend. The former had not the least notion who he was: so at last he said, "Well, my boy, you seem to know me; and who are you?"

"Please, sir, I'm Jack."

"Jack? Jack who?"

"Only Jack, sir, please, sir."

All at once it came across him who the lad was.

"I remember you now," he said. "Have you tried to keep your promise to love the Lord Jesus, and show how much you love him by obeying him?"

"Yes, sir, I have; indeed I have," he answered, with the greatest earnestness.

Inexpressibly delighted, the gentleman stopped and talked to him a little, making an excuse by letting him clean his shoes.

"Can you read, Jack?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, not over well; but I can make shift to spell out a page."

"Would you like a Testament of your own, where you could read for yourself the story you heard the other night?"

There was no answer, but half a chuckle of happiness at the bare idea. There was no pretense about the lad. The dirty little thief had set his face heavenward.

"I see you *would* like it, Jack," added his friend. "Come to my room at—to-morrow, and you shall have one. Good-by."

Exactly at the appointed hour on the morrow came one modest, eager tap at the door. In walked Jack. The gentleman shook hands with him, and made him come and sit by him.

"Jack, why do you want a Testament?"

"To read about Jesus you told us of," said he shortly.


"Why do you want to read about him? Because you love him, is it?" Jack nodded once, shortly and decisively. "There was no doubt about the matter, not a whit."

"Why do you love him?"

Jack was silent. His little ordinary features moved in a singular way; his eyes twinkled; his breast heaved. All at once he dropped his head on the table, sobbing as if his heart would break. "'Cause they killed him," gasped poor Jack.

His name was written, or rather printed, at his request, "*very large*," in his Testament. The gentleman then prayed with him that the good Shepherd might help and guide this poor little lamb in his dark and difficult path; and, with a little more talk about his prospects, they parted.

We need scarcely point out the secret of this happy history. Poor Jack believed that what the Lord did in dying on the cross, he did *for him*, even for him, who was so sinful, so unworthy. The belief of this won his heart, as it always will *win the hearts* of those who really believe it. Nothing else was needed. This heart was now full of Christ, and of his love; and he longed to tell other dying sinners of the way in which they, too, might be happy.



WORK! WORK! WORK!

JOHN Murray was a wide-awake, busy man, whose boast was that he had always said, "come, boys," and never, "go, boys," to his farm-hands—who talked about the "early worm," and "the door on its hinges," and was fond of quoting, "a little more sleep, and a little more slumber," etc. He worked early and late, and stored up gold off his broad acres, which he carefully hoarded for his children's children.

When he was fifty years old a great change came over him, turning his work into another channel, and forcing his neighbors to acknowledge that he was a new man. He had received grace and pardon, but not yet the wisdom of Solomon. He did not know yet how ignorant he was, but he knew how he longed to bless others; and as he had plowed, harrowed, sowed and reaped his own field, so he now went zealously to work on the new field, which is the world. He attacked sin wherever he met it; assailed the tavern-keeper, threatened to prosecute him and to turn his poison into the streets; he set his face against the village dances, and rebuked the blind fiddler in a way that made him tremble in every limb; and he even proposed breaking up the singing-school, to do away with the levity it encouraged. Having done all the work he could at home, he resolved to visit his son, in Western New York, hoping to bless him and his township.

Now, Mr. Murray's literary attainments had hitherto been confined to the "Farmer's Almanac" and an agricultural newspaper, both of which he read so often that he knew them almost by heart. The Bible, with its gilt cover and clasps, and its fine engravings, had been, till now, but

a parlor ornament, and it is not strange if his quotations were not always literal. The passages of Scripture learned in his childhood, at his mother's knee, still lay in his memory, strangely jumbled up with old sayings and proverbs from the primer and almanac, and almost from Mother Goose. He had a vague, undefined feeling that all things pure and good came from the Bible, and God wrought no special miracle to instil its precise words into his mind. There is no "royal road to Bible lore any more than to the secular lore of the ages.

Well, full of joy and of work, but very empty of the wisdom which experience brings, good Brother Murray set out on his mission to the heathen of Western New York. He exhorted every conductor and brakeman on the road, and gave away tracts by the hundred among workmen and passengers on the cars, and was amazed to find no revival following him on the road. When he reached his son's house, and had fulfilled his duty to the young man and his wife, he was perfectly rejoiced to see a new and exciting field open before him. Young John had two workmen, a Catholic and a skeptic. Now, there was not a Catholic within ten miles of "the old man's" home; and, in his narrowness, he had regarded all who held to that faith as stupid, ignorant dupes, who believed anything their priests chose to tell them; and it was a fixed fact, in his mind, that these priests were, without exception, unprincipled wire-pullers, who were trying to undermine our institutions and to devour their own followers.

He felt, dear, zealous soul, that Terrance Kilroy was thrown into his hands for enlightenment, and he went at the poor fellow in right good earnest. Terrance had been consecrated in his poor cabin-home as "the makin's o' a priest;" but, the hard times coming on, he had resolved to come to America, put his strong young hands to work,

and get a home for his aged parents and little sisters ; and, with this end in view, labor was prayer with him. He made young John Murray's interests his own, rising early and sitting up late, if need be. He planned his work so as to accomplish the most in a given time ; he avoided all vain and idle companions ; spent his leisure with a few books and newspapers in his little barn-chamber ; and walked three miles to mass, and back again, before breakfast on Sunday morning. He was a faithful, cheerful, kind-hearted fellow, and as he himself boasted, "as honest as the yellow sun above us." If Terrance Kilroy was in darkness, it was not because he did not desire the light. He lived, as nearly as he knew how, "up to the ten commandments," specially to the one that says, "honor your father and your mother."

The "skeptic" was a jaunty fellow, in his way. He talked a great deal, and knew what was going on in the world, and the Church too ; he quoted the Bible and Shakespeare, and even hinted at Huxley and Darwin, though it is doubtful if he knew who they were. His large, confident talk frightened off poor brother Murray, at first, and restrained all his pent-up force intended to work on Terrance. Deciding that the fair-faced Irish boy had never heard of any religion but his own, and that he would grasp at the truth when it was held out to him, he appointed an hour at sunset to walk over the farm with him.

Poor Terrance, glad to show the improvements his young master was making, set forth with him, descanting on the quality of this piece of land for wheat, and that for corn, when suddenly the old gentleman remarked : "How true the Bible speaks when it says, 'God made the country, but man made the town !'"

Terrance bowed, but made no reply. He did not know enough to refute the statement.

"You're from Ireland, young man," said brother Murray.

"Yes; thank the Lord," said the youth, with the color mounting to his cheeks; "and it's the loveliest land the Lord smiles on from heaven."

Mr. Murray stared. He had thought all Irishmen ashamed of their native land, and that it was a bleak, barren bog, of which they had good right to be ashamed.

"I suppose, my good lad, you know that you have a soul, like the rest of us," he suggested, by way of opening negotiations.

"Deed sir, I do; and I've been raised to be more mindful o' it than o' the body that perisheth," replied Terrance, lifting his hat in respect to his soul.

"Indeed," cried Mr. Murray, doubtfully, and added, "do you think you are a sinner, my friend?"

"Indeed, sir, I am; and fights daily agin the world, the flesh, and the devil," said the honest youth.

"Yes, we have the Bible for that fact:

'In Adam's fall we sinned all.'

Who do you sin against, my lad?"

"Against God, my Father and best friend," replied Terrance, solemnly.

"And who can forgive your sins?"

"God alone, sir."

"That's the truth; but you are no Catholic my lad, if you believe that," said brother Murray.

"Deed, thin, I am, sir—a throe Catholic!"

"But Catholics worship saints and angels and virgins and crosses and beads, and pray to them too."

"No sir, less they be some poor heathen."

"But Terrance, my good fellow, you must not contradict a man of my years, who knows so much more than you do! Do you suppose I have come to this time of life

without knowing that Catholics believe they sin against the priests, and pray to them for pardon, and worship them, and lots of other inanimate objects?"

Terrance scratched his head, seemed at a loss how to reply with both truth and civility, and merely said, "beg your pardon, sir."

This did not seem quite enough reward for his work, and so Brother Murray continued: "You know very well, my lad, that your priests are all hard-hearted, immoral men, who squeeze the last cent out of their people, and care no more for their souls than if they were grasshoppers."

"No, sir; I know no such thing! Father Clary, at home, was just an angel o' mercy to the widdy and fatherless; and as long as his male chist and petaty bin held out, not a Christian suffered want in his parish! And the same 's thrue o' young father Burke, o' Killyrony. They feared God, and loved all men, and 's a high chair that 's waitin' them above, sir."

"Then how could they teach you all to do your best to overturn our free institutions when you got here?"

"They never did, sir."

"Don't you pray that all men outside your Church may lose their souls?"

"Niver, sir; but that God would open their eyes and save them, sir—every creetur' o' 'em!"

Our poor friend lost patience with his own ignorance, and the honest boy's good nature, and opened on him with a zeal that was void of wisdom giving his views of the Catholic Church and its priesthood till he roused the warm blood of poor Terrance into anger.

Then the little Church lore he had learned came up, and Terrance began at Henry VIII. and his unsuccessful attempt to legalize his marriage with Catherine of Arra-

gon, and ended that story by saying, "the ould Blue Beard, failin' to get leave o' the Church to commit sin, got up a church o' his own, in which he could set at naught the laws o' God and man, and so came the Protestant Church."

Poor Brother Murray did not know enough to tell Terrance that the true Christian Church was founded by Christ himself, and not by any earthly king or prelate. He had never heard of Henry VIII. nor of the schism he had made in the Romish Church, which its votaries insist on calling the formation of the Church opposed to it. Mr. Murray withdrew from the conflict he was waging in the dark, with the uncomplimentary remark that it was no use arguing with an Irishman, as he had always heard they could not understand anything; and added, "I've done all I can, but I can't help you. If you lose your soul I am clear of guilt." And the poor man really felt as if all his self-sacrificing labor was lost, and he was wounded by the thought.

He tried again to work on the conceited young "skeptical," who began adroitly to brandish Huxley and Darwin over his head, and poor Brother Murray dropped him as if he were made of hot iron. Then he stood aghast, and looked about for work. "Western New York" (which, with him, meant his son's farm) was a most unproductive field.

Having done all he could for Terrance and "the skeptical," feeling that John and his wife were far beyond him in the shining way, he was at a loss how to finish up his week's visit without wasting time, when it occurred to him that he had overlooked his daughter-in-law's grandmother, a patient, silent old lady, who seemed always helping others.

"I hope," he said to her, one day, "that you haven't reached this time of life without a good hope for the world to come?"

"Oh no," replied the old lady, pleasantly, "I settled all my soul's affairs, through God's mercy, in my youth; and I have long been waiting His call to go home."

"But you must not wait in idleness, my friend; you can work and watch at the same time. 'Work, work, work,' was my motto while I served the world, and it's my motto now!" said Brother Murray.

"Work wisely done is well," replied the old lady.

"Work is the soul of religion," replied Brother Murray, with the air of one assailed on a tender point.

"But we must work wisely, as well as actively," said the old lady. "We may serve God sometimes, by sitting still, with folded hands."

"What? What?" cried Brother Murray.

"A great man says,

'They also serve who only stand and wait;'
so it is better to keep still than to work in the wrong way," replied the meek old saint.

"What way can be wrong, if you are in earnest, and go at it with all your might?" asked Brother Murray.

"Oh, much that is called 'work' hinders the wheels of the Church, and rejoices its enemies," was the reply.

"Don't the Bible say,

'All play and no work
Makes Jack———',

well, I don't know as that is in the Bible; but something just like it is," said Mr. Murray.

The old lady smiled, and her catechist asked her in surprise, "don't you think you ought to speak to every one you see, and stir them up about their souls?"

"Yes, at the right time and in the right way."

"How can a body work wrong?"

"Well, a blacksmith might be so anxious to work that he would take a watch, put it in the fire till it was melted, and then screw it in a vise, and pound it with his hammer.

That work might do for a bolt or horse-shoe, but he had better be sitting with folded hands than doing it. A mariner might be so eager for work as to pull up his anchor and hoist his sail before his compass was set, or his cargo was on board. He would be wiser to sit down and wait, if he had nothing wiser to do," said the old lady.

"Perhaps you think I don't work wisely," said Brother Murray.

"I think you work very unwisely," was the candid reply.

"How?"

"You have overturned my work of a year on poor Terrence. I had his heart and his ear, and have given him a great deal of instruction in the Scripture; he looked on me as the friend of his soul; I never reviled his Church nor his clergy; I had nothing to do with them, but talked to him as a sinner, needing the peace and joy there is in Christ; he is an earnest, sincere soul; and I have had great comfort in teaching him the way of life. But that is over now. He tells me that my Church are unjust, cruel, and call the good men in his Church rogues and villains; and he wants no more of my religion, nor of me either I fear. There is that bright young George, who knows a great deal, but thinks he knows a great deal more, who reads a little of everything written against religion; now he feels that he has triumphed over the Gospel, and proved it a lie because you could not answer all his objections to its truth."

"Then you think I ought to do nothing, do you?" asked the crest-fallen Brother Murray.

"No, my friend; I think you ought to learn a great deal, and prepare yourself to instruct others. In the meantime treat doubters tenderly, and show by your interest in them your love for their souls. When you are skilful enough, then

become a workman on that wonderful piece of mechanism, the mind of man. Read, and think, and pray, and do all the good you can; but don't teach theology just yet; don't attempt to repair a chronometer with a saw and sledge-hammer, nor send ships without compass or rudder on the vast ocean. We need great wisdom as well as great grace, Brother; and He who has one has also the other, and He will give freely without upbraiding to such as, seeing their ignorance and folly, come humbly to Him for guidance. Zeal without knowledge has made many a shipwreck on the sea of life."—By MRS. JANE D. CHAPLIN, in the *Zion's Herald*.

HOW THE FATHER'S BLESSING CAME.

THORD was the mightiest man in the parish. He stood one day in the parson's study, tall and grave.

"I have a son," he said, "and wish him christened."

"What shall be his name?"

"Finn, after my father."

"And the godparents?"

Thord told their names, and they were the best men of the parish, and women of his own kin.

"Is there anything more?" asked the parson, looking up.

Thord stood a moment. "I would like to have him baptized alone," said he.

"That is to say, on a week day?"

"Saturday next, at 12 o'clock."

"Is there anything more?"

"No, that is all."

Thord fumbled with his cap; he was about to leave. Then the parson stood up, went straight to him, and grasped his hand. "God give," said he, looking into his eyes, "that this child be a blessing unto thee."

Sixteen years after that day Thord stood once more in the parson's study. "Thou keepest on quite well, Thord," said the parson; he could see no change in him.

"For I have no grief," answered Thord.

To this the parson said nothing, but after awhile he asked: "What is thy errand to-night?"

"This night I have come for my son. He is to be confirmed to-morrow."

"He is a good boy."

"I would not pay the parson until I knew what place he was to have among the other boys."

"He is number one."

"I hear so, and these ten dollars are for you."

"Is there anything more?" asked the parson, looking at Thord.

"No! that is all." And Thord left.

Eight years had passed away, and then, one day, a great noise was heard before the parson's study, for many men were coming, and Thord at their head. The parson looked up. "Thou comest in great number, to-day," he said.

"I come to have read the bans for my son. He is going to marry Karen Storliden, daughter of Gudmund, who stands here."

"She is the richest girl in the parish."

"People say so," answered Thord, as he smoothed away the hair from his forehead.

The parson sat a minute in deep thought. He said nothing, but put down the names in his book, and the men signed. Thord laid three dollars on the table.

"I shall have only one," said the parson.

"I know it, but he is my only child, and I want to do all this well." The parson took the money.

"This is the third time, Thord, thou standest here for thy son."

"But this time is also the last," said Thord, "for now I am done." He folded his pocket-book, bade farewell, and went away, the other men following slowly.

Ten days after, the father and son were rowing in calm weather, over the water to Storliden, to speak about the wedding feast.

"This seat is not firm under me," said the son; he rose to make it right. But the board he stood upon slipped. He threw up his arms, shrieked, and fell into the water.

"Take hold of this oar," said the father as he stood up and held it out. But when the son had made a few strokes he grew stiff.

"Wait a minute," cried the father; he rowed toward him. But the son fell back, looking longingly at the father, and sank.

Thord could not believe it. He kept the boat still and stared at the spot where the son had gone down, as if he must come up once more. Some bubbles arose, some few more, then one big one that burst, and smooth lay the water like glass.

For three days and three nights the people saw the father rowing about this one spot, taking neither food nor sleep; he sought for his son. On the third day, toward morning, he found his son and bore him home, up over the hills.

About a year passed away. Then one late evening in the fall, the parson heard somebody groping in the entry and feeling for the lock. He opened the door, and a tall

but stooping man came in; he was thin and had gray hairs. The parson looked at him for a long while before he knew him; it was Thord.

"Thou comest late," said the parson, and he stood still before him.

"Yes. I come late," said Thord; he sat down.

The parson sat down, too, as if he waited. There was silence for a long time.

Then Thord said: "I have something with me which I wish to give to the poor." He stood up, laid money on the table, and sat down again. The parson counted it. "It is a great sum," he said.

"Half of what I have; I sold my farm to-day."

The parson sat in long silence. At last he asked mildly: "What will you do now?"

"Something better."

They sat awhile; Thord with his eyes on the floor, the parson with his eyes on Thord. Then said the parson, slowly and mildly; "Now I think thy son has at last become a blessing unto thee."

"I think so, too," said Thord; he looked up, and two tears dropped heavily down his cheeks.—*From the Norwegian.*



ANNA WILSON'S WRITTEN PRAYER.

"THE week of Prayer is near," thought Anna Wilson, as she sat alone in her room at the close of the year. Snow was falling silently outside, and a cozy little wood fire was blazing on the hearth by which she sat. "The week of Prayer is near. Is it going to be a time of any special blessing to me? What am I going to ask for? What do I want?" She glanced again

over the printed list of subjects for prayer, thinking, "Yes, surely, I will pray for the church and the world, for the heathen and the missionary societies, and for all classes and conditions of men, but after all, if my prayer is only for blessings in general, how shall I ever know if it is answered? There are some things I should like to have. I will ask my Heavenly Father for them."

Then came into her mind a fragment from Tupper, something like this: "Write thy requests; for a written prayer is a prayer of faith, certain to be answered." So she drew her little table towards her, opened her desk, and wrote as follows:

In humble submission to the wise and loving will of God, I make these requests of him:

1. I want to be a better Christian; will the good Lord make me stronger in Christian character, and more efficient in Christian work?

Then, pausing in her writing, she thought, "Perhaps when I ask for more strength of character, I am asking for trials and afflictions. Well, if that is the way to grow, I suppose I am willing. But Jesus prayed for his people, 'Sanctify them through thy truth,' not sanctify them by trouble. And then there is what he said about abiding in him. I see, I must spend more time in communion with Christ and in studying his word, if I want to grow." And then she thought of the hurried devotions of her mornings, and her short and sleepy prayer at night, and resolved henceforth to rise a little earlier, that she might have a quiet time before breakfast, and to steal away to her room at dusk, if possible, to spend the twilight with her Lord alone.

"My second petition," she thought, "for efficiency in Christian work,—yes, I suppose it means that I must take part in our ladies' prayer-meeting, which I have hitherto

refused, and let my name be put on that committee for visiting Dublin street and the poor-house. Well, yes, I do suppose God has been offering me for a good while just what I am asking now, and I have held back." Then she wrote again :

2. I ask God to make me a better teacher, both in day school and in my Sunday-school class.

"There it is again," she said to herself. "God has offered me that, too. There are books to which I have access, which I ought to be studying; books in both departments, secular and religious. And I have been reading stories instead. I suppose that prayer necessitates my beginning a course of study. I do believe we ask more of God than we are willing to take the trouble to take!"

3. I ask for the conversion of the five girls in my Sunday-school class, and for a more thoughtful and tractable spirit in my school.

And as she wrote, she blushed, remembering that she had only spoken to one of the five in private about her soul, and had never prayed with any of them.

4. I ask that my father may have better success in business; that mother's health may be restored; that brother Will may be kept safe from peril to body and soul in his sailor life; and that some way may be provided for my little sister to get the musical education she craves.

"At least," thought Anna, as she wrote this down, "here are things concerning which I can feel no self-reproach. Only, perhaps, I might write more frequent and helpful letters to Will. I'll try that. And as to Louise; why cannot I do without that new hat I was going to indulge in? That money would make a good nest-egg toward the lessons. Oh, dear!" she said, with a long sigh, "there goes my hat, my pet dream of self-indulgence, with its soft black velvet and feather, and its

sweet moss-rose! Wasn't it going to be pretty? But the old one will do for the rest of the season, I dare say it is my duty to be unfashionable. I always said I meant to be a free woman, and never make myself a slave to fashion, and now is my chance to 'assert my independence! But where have I strayed to? Discussing my old hat in the middle of my prayer!" And she resumed:

5. I pray that these people with whom I board may become a Christian family:

After writing this petition she laid down her pen, and fell to thinking long and seriously in regard to her representation of Christ and his religion in the good, kind family who were so friendly to her, but did not number themselves among the people of God. And as a result of her thinking, she knelt and prayed many things which she did not write.

And when she rose, she quietly folded her written prayer, and put it in her Bible. "I cannot ask anything else to-night," she said to herself. "I've laid out work enough for myself to keep me busy and watchful and prayerful and studious and economical for one year, I think. How I have been asking all these years for things I thought I wanted, and wondering why God didn't give them! And all the time he was giving, and giving, and I was too lazy to take them! God help me, not only to keep a Week of Prayer,* but to spend the year in taking and using what he is continually offering me! I will keep my written prayer, and read it over often to remind me."

Anna Wilson's written prayer is more than "a prayer of faith," it has "work" added unto it, and is doubtless "sure to be answered."—By AGATE M. NORTON.



THE HEAVY LOAD.

ROBERT Holmes was a boy; a real one, like you and Charley and Tom and Will, that you see and talk with every day, and not one of those model chaps that live in story-books.

So one day, when his father told him to take a great roll of newspapers, snugly tied up, to a store, nearly a mile from where he lived, *he grumbled*. Not before his father, you know, but after his back was turned, and when he had felt how heavy it was, and thought how hot and sunny the day was, and what a long, long distance he had to go, then he grumbled just as you would have done; for he was a real live boy, as I said before.

Bob had a brother, and the idea entered his forlorn little head that he would get him to help him. But when he had found Harry and made known his request, he discovered that Harry had his task to do, and so could not help him.

At length he came to the wise conclusion that the longer he delayed the worse things looked to him; so, with a sigh, he shouldered the heavy roll, and went on his toilsome errand. He passed his father on the way, who smiled and said a few words of encouragement. Now, a model boy would have brightened up at this, and grown suddenly strong, and gone on his way rejoicing. But poor little Bob, being a real boy, only thought to himself that it was all very fine for his father to talk about it; but how would he like it, if he was a little fellow, and had to carry such a heavy load in the hot sun so far?

Then he met some of his schoolmates going on a little excursion out of the city, where they were to have a famous ramble in the woods, and a delightful swim in clear,

cool, sparkling water. How some of them displayed their enjoyment before poor little Bob's eyes, with all the arrogance of wealth to poverty, and others in pitying condescension, which was even a little worse to Bob, he being only a real boy, as you are and I once was.

The tears almost came into his eyes as he trudged on with the tantalizing sounds of their merry shouts and laughter ringing in his ears. Phew! how hot it was! And yet Bob was not a quarter of the way yet.

Then came rebellious thoughts. "Why didn't father send it by express, or get some porter to carry it?" Nobody was there to answer this question, so Bob didn't ask another; but, grabbing at the bundle as if that had anything to do with his toilsome errand, he gave it a half angry shake, and pushed on with a curious kind of short-lived vigor that anger sometimes gives one. It proved of very brief existence in Bob's case, for he soon threw the bundle down for another rest.

Just then came along a poorly clad, but clean-faced looking boy, who, glancing timidly at Bob's good clothes, said, "Please let me help you with your bundle?"

This begins to sound a little unreal, but the boy was not a model one, but was real, too. To be sure, they are not very plenty, but if you think pretty hard and long you may be able to find some one whom this poor boy's cap would fit.

"You have got a basket of your own to carry," said Bob, moodily. "Besides this bundle is only paper, and light for its size."

"But it is a big bundle," urged the boy. "Come, let me take hold of this end."

Bob had reached the abused-martyr point. You know what I mean. He experienced a gloomy satisfaction in thinking what a kind of martyr he was. You have felt it,

doubtless. Anyway, Bob had the complaint so bad that if the other boy had not been in real earnest, Bob would have clung to his bundle and the luxury of grief at the same time. As it was, the poorly-clad boy plead for the end of the bundle as if it were a special favor, and Bob gave in.

The store was soon reached. Bob delivered the bundle, after thanking his helper, which I came near omitting to mention, and Bob came nearer omitting it altogether, being such a real boy, and so glad to see the detested old thing out of his hands forever. There was a note directed to the man who kept the store. He smiled as he read it. What do you think it was? Somebody else smiled all over when he afterward knew what was in the note, and that was Bob.

"Seventeen pounds," said the man, weighing the package of paper. "Eight cents per pound (it was in war time), makes one dollar and thirty-six cents. Here it is."

Yes, there it was, in new, bright, crisp paper. Four twenty-five cent notes, and three tens, one five, and a bright nickel penny.

"And here is your father's note, my little man, which you are to read."

Bob took the half sheet of note-paper on which his father had written, in his well-known hand, "Pay the bearer (my son) the usual price for this paper. The money, whatever it may be, is for him to spend as he pleases."

How Bob's eyes sparkled! One dollar and thirty-six cents! All his own! There seemed no end of the things he could buy with such a heap of money. And what do you think almost his first thought was? To put half in the mite-chest on the mantelpiece at home?

No; didn't I tell you Bob was a real boy, and not a make-believe one? He thought, and thought aloud, "Oh I wish the bundle had been heavier." Curious! He had

been grumbling at its being too heavy, and now it turns out it was not heavy enough.

When he reached home, after making two or three stops and exchanging some of the money for some of the thousand and one things money can buy, he met his father, who smiled on him in a very peculiar way.

"Oh, thank you, papa! The paper brought one dollar and thirty-six cents."

"The bundle was not too heavy, then?"

Bob reddened as he answered, "I thought it was when I carried it, but when I found out I was to have the price of it, I didn't care then how heavy it was."

"Bob, you are not apt to forget this morning, are you?"

"No, indeed, papa. I do not think I ever shall."

"Well, my dear son, add this to your recollections. You will have many a heavy burden to carry in this life, no matter how prosperous you may be. You may get tired, almost worn out, as you were this morning; but bear the load with courage and submission to the Good Father, who has lovingly laid it upon you, and in the coming kingdom of heaven you will look back on this life, and even wish its burdens had been heavier. The harder the cross you bear for Christ's sake, the brighter the crown you will wear in the great hereafter."—*Churchman*.

THE HAPPY SHEPHERD.

MERANCE having experienced some very severe afflictions and disappointments while yet ignorant of the only source of real consolation, sunk into a deep and settled melancholy. In this gloomy mood he wandered in the woods for hours together, regardless of the weather and seemingly unconscious of every surrounding object.

On one of the brightest mornings in May, he was wandering, in his usual disconsolate manner, amongst the wooded mountains that skirted his estate. Suddenly he came to a deep glen which terminated in a narrow valley. It was covered with rich green herbage, and was surrounded on all sides with thick woods. A flock was feeding at the bottom and a clear brook watered it. Underneath the broad shade of spreading oak sat an aged shepherd, who was attentively reading a book. His crook and pipe were lying on the bank near him, and his faithful dog was guarding his satchel at his feet. The Abbe was much struck by his appearance. His locks were white with age, yet a venerable and cheerful benignity appeared in his countenance. His clothes were worn completely threadbare and patched by every different color. His brow was furrowed by time; but as he lifted up his eyes from the book, they seemed almost to beam with the expression of heartfelt peace and innocence.

Notwithstanding his mean garb, the Abbe de Rance involuntarily felt a degree of respect and kindness for the man. "My good friend," said he, with a tone of affectionate sympathy, "you seem very poor, and at an advanced age; can I render your latter days more comfortable?"

The old man, looking at him steadfastly, but with the greatest benignity, replied, "I humbly thank you, sir, for your kindness; did I stand in need of it, I should most gratefully accept it; but blessed be God, his mercy and goodness have left nothing even to wish."

"Nothing to wish!" replied M. de Rance, who began to suspect his shepherd's garb to be a disguise, "I shall suspect you of being a greater philosopher than any I know!—Think again."

"Sir," replied the shepherd mildly,—"*this little flock which you see, I love as if it were my own, though it*

belongs to another ; God has put it in my master's heart to show me more kindness than I deserve. I love to sit here and meditate on all the mercies of God to me in this life ; and above all, I love to read and meditate on his glorious promises for that which is to come. I will assure you, sir, that while I watch my sheep, I receive many a sweet lesson on the good Shepherd's watchful care over me and all of us. What can I wish, sir, more ?

"But, good man," returned the Abbe, "did it never come into your head that your master may change, or your flock may die ? Should you not like to be independent, instead of trusting to fortuitous circumstances ?"

"Sir," replied the shepherd, "I look upon it that I do not depend upon circumstances, but the great and good God who directs them. This is what makes me happy, happy at heart. God in mercy enables me to lie down and sleep secure, on the immutable strength of that blessed word, 'All things work together for good to them that love God.' My reliance in my poverty is that love of God ; if I were ever so rich I could not be more secure ; for on what else, but on his will, can the most flourishing prospects depend for their stability ?" The Abbe felt some emotion at this pointed observation ; he, however, smothered it and said, "very few have your firmness of mind." "Sir," answered the man, "you should rather say few seek their strength from God." Then steadily fixing his eye on M. de Rance, he added, "Sir, it is not firmness of mind ; I know misfortune as well as others ; and I know, too, that where affliction comes close, no firmness of mind only can or will carry a man through. However strong a man may be, afflictions may yet be stronger, unless his strength be in the strength of God. Again, sir, I say, it is not firmness of mind, but it is a firm and heartfelt conviction founded on Scripture and the experi-

ence of God's mercy in Christ,—*It is faith, that faith which itself is the gift of God.*"

The man paused, then looking at M. de Rance with great interest, he added, "Sir, your kindness calls for my gratitude. Permit me to show it in the only way I can. And I will add, that if you do not know this gift, he calls you to it as much as me. I see by your countenance that, though so young, you have known sorrow. I could sincerely wish that you might read on mine, that, though at so advanced and infirm an age, I enjoy the blessings of peace. Yet though you are probably learned, whilst I am unlearned, I believe the secret of true happiness is the same to all. Let me then show my gratitude, by telling you what the teaching of God, or His word and providence, has taught me. I was not always blest with the happiness I now enjoy. When I was young, I had a farm of my own, I had a wife whom I dearly loved, and I was blessed with sweet children. Yet with all these good things I was never happy; for I knew not God, the Supreme Good. With every temporal blessing, I never reaped pure enjoyment, for my affections were never in due subordination. My eyes being turned to the channel of temporal blessings instead of God, their source, I was in constant anxiety to grasp more, or lest I should lose what I had already got. God had compassion upon me, and sent misfortune to lead me to him. I once had a son, the pride of my heart; a daughter, and she began to be the friend and comfort of her mother. Each was grown up, and began to yield us comfort beyond our fondest hopes; when each we had to watch through a slow and lingering disease. Blessed be God, that taught them to live the life of his saints and gives them now as the angels in heaven to behold his glory face to face. They were taught, but not of us; it was the work of God; of that God

whom as yet we knew not. Their deaths—but, oh! how unspeakably bitter did that pang seem, which came in mercy to call us to God and give us spiritual life! Till we fainted under the stroke, we did not remember that our insensible hearts had never yet been thankful for the blessing, whose loss we were ready to repine at; we can now in mercy say that we know afflictions do not spring out of the dust. Blessed be God, I can now from my very heart thank Him, for uniting me for all the ages of a blissful eternity, with those dear and angelic spirits towards whom I only thought of the short intercourse of time. Oh! how short my views; how long his love. Surely his mercy, and the fruit of it, endureth for ever. This was our greatest affliction; besides, I have through a variety of events, lost my relations and possessions, and I now, in my old age, serve in the house where I was once master. Yet, I find indeed, that ‘to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, is indeed life eternal.’ A man’s life does not consist in the abundance which he possesses, but in that peace which passes all understanding, and which the world can neither give nor take away. I desire to live by faith day by day, and trust to the Lord to provide for the morrow. In short, sir, I have found by experience, that every worldly good without God is empty, and that God without any worldly good, is as of old, all sufficient!”

HIS WORD IS AT STAKE.

GRANDLY did the old Scottish believer, of whom Dr. Brown tells us in his “*Horræ Subsecivæ*,” respond to the challenge of her pastor, regarding the ground of her confidence!

"Janet," said the minister, what would you say, if after all he has done for you, God should let you drop into hell?"

"E'en's [even as] he likes," answered Janet. "If he does, he'll lose mair than I'll do?"

At first sight Janet's reply looks irreverent, if not something worse. As we contemplate it, however, its sublimity grows upon us. Like the Psalmist, she could say, "I on thy word rely," (Ps. 119; 114 metrical version.) If his word were broken, if his faithfulness should fail, if that foundation could be destroyed, truly he would lose more than his trusting child. But that could never be. "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. Thy faithfulness is unto all generations." Well, then, might Janet encourage herself in the Lord her God, and say, "God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice."

All the promises of God are absolutely sure and certain in Christ Jesus, who is freely offered to all in the gospel. Embracing Christ in the promises, or the promises in Christ, we hold the Almighty by an indissoluble bond. The two immutable things, God's oath confirming God's promise, are pledged to us; and if God has thus spoken, should not believers rejoice?

"He has power, and can fulfil;
He is truth, and therefore will!"

AN ALLEGORY.

DURING the course of my travels in foreign lands, it was my fortune to be a spectator on one occasion of one of the most curious ceremonies I ever remember having witnessed.

Partaking for a few days of the hospitality of a gentleman to whom I had obtained letters of introduction, I was invited to accompany him and a number of his fellow-townsmen, who were to have an interview with the King for the purpose of laying before him some most important petitions.

At the time appointed we proceeded to the audience chamber, where we found a few individuals already assembled, but I was, I must confess, somewhat surprised to observe that the larger number of the company came late, and dropped in one or two at a time, after the King had arrived and the several speakers had commenced to address him. They seemed to me to act in defiance of all rules of etiquette usually observed upon such occasions.

Some time after the hour appointed—a sufficient number having by this time gathered—the leader of the assemblage introduced the deputation to the King in a short speech, in which he thanked his Majesty for the privilege accorded to them in being permitted to come into his presence and make known their wants and requests. He also thanked the King for all past favors and informed him that some most important matters vital to the people's welfare and the King's honor would be laid before him. The speaker then proceeded to enlarge to a great extent upon the King and his doings, which I thought quite needless, as I felt sure the King did not need to be informed what he himself was, and what he himself had done, nor could I see the force of entreating the King to remain with them till the end of the proceedings, since he had previously intimated that he had come there with that intention.

The assembly then sang an ode, supposed to be in honor of the King, but it seemed to me to be most inappropriate. Some passages were then read from the code of laws and

instructions that had long since been issued by the King's command, upon which I naturally supposed it was the intention to base the requests about to be presented to his Majesty, so as to ensure that he should grant them. The leader of the deputation then called upon one of its principal members to address the King and lay their business before him. Accordingly, the individual in question began, but to my intense amazement he too thanked his Majesty for the privilege now accorded them, reminded him of his greatness and goodness, thanked him for all his past favors, besought him to remain with them till the close of the audience, and to listen to the other speakers who might address him.

Another ode was then sung, and a few more extracts from the code of instructions were read, and then the leader asked two members of the deputation to address the King on behalf of all. No language can express my intense astonishment at hearing the first who spoke go over precisely the same ground that had been taken by his two predecessors. I smiled almost involuntarily, and glancing at the King, caught his eye, and saw that he shared my amused amazement.

When this worthy individual had repeated all that the two former speakers had said, he proceeded in a rapid and indifferent manner to lay a number of requests before the King, but so many were they in number, and so varied in character, and so vague in their purport, that I felt it was almost mocking his Majesty to expect him to pay much heed.

When the next speaker took up the strain, he likewise rambled over so wide a field, and had apparently so little real interest in any one subject, that I wondered he had been chosen to speak at all. He seemed not to be in the slightest degree aware that the deputation had any special

aim in view. He wound up with a reference to the King's distant colonies, which seemed to be a favorite topic with all who succeeded him. I need not weary you with any further minute particulars of the proceedings; suffice it to say that several other odes were sung and some further extracts read from the book already mentioned, and three or four other members of the deputation in turn addressed the King. But while some seemed to fancy that their own private affairs were the most suitable topics to speak of, and others seemed to lean towards public matters, scarce one of the whole number appeared to me to have the least notion that any special object needed to be mentioned to the King. And so numerous were the requests presented that it was a matter of impossibility that any urgency could attach to any one of them. When the time allowed for the audience had ended, the chief man who had introduced the deputation once more addressed the King, thanking him that he had remained with them, and asking him to bear in mind and respond to their petitions; and with a few complimentary words the deputation withdrew. As I was a stranger, his Majesty graciously beckoned me to remain that I might be presented to him, which was done. After answering a few questions, I ventured to express, in terms befitting the occasion, some surprise at the patience displayed by the King in listening to so much that seemed without definite aim. The King responded very condescendingly that the truth was, that he loved his people and could bear with a great deal that grieved him in their conduct, and that he knew many of them really felt strongly attached to him and his throne, though it might not appear so to me. He further said that there were a few at all the audiences who really felt what they said, and who did find it a consolation to see him and open their hearts to him, though by far the greater number came as a

mere matter of form. I inquired respectfully whether the King intended to respond to the petitions presented to him. He smiled, and said that he feared his people would be sadly discomposed if he were to grant all or even a great portion of the requests made on any one occasion. He said further, "I fear that very few of them really have any sense of need; they do not *want* what they ask of me; if they did their addresses would be more pointed and importunate than they are." The King added that he "had been thinking that the facility with which audience could be obtained, tended to make it less prized, and he had it in mind to abandon, or at least modify, this somewhat too Republican simplicity, and place some of the barriers used in European courts in the way of access to his presence—perhaps then his people would value more highly what now was all but despised." In pursuance of the topic his Majesty said he "was compelled at times to withdraw some of the privileges enjoyed by his subjects, and even permit abuses to run riot so that they might be reminded that it was not entirely a matter of form when they presented petitions." I withdrew from the royal presence marvelling much at the long-suffering and forbearance displayed by the King. It far surpassed anything I had ever seen or heard of in my own country.

Next day I happened to meet one of the most prominent members of the deputation, and asked him "when he anticipated receiving the King's answer." He started, and asked me in much astonishment "what I meant." I repeated more plainly my question, and said I referred to the audience he had last evening of the King. He seemed very much confused, and apparently had not given it a thought, nor did he even appear to remember *what* had been asked for. Upon my pressing upon him further inquiries, I made the discovery that when he went to the

King's presence he really had no knowledge of any special need, and that when called upon to address the King he scarce knew what to say—but that he had done the best he could, and had repeated all he could recall of several former addresses he and others had made, without bestowing very much thought upon what he had said. I reminded him of one or two special requests he had made, and found upon inquiry that he had not the most distant idea when he asked that he should ever receive the things which he had mentioned; he had not thought of them since, and had made no preparation for receiving them, and would find it extremely inconvenient if by any chance the King should see fit to send them. Finally he made a clean breast of it, and said that he had never looked upon the weekly audience as a practical affair at all. He went because it was the custom with his people, and he made it a habit; he liked to meet his friends and it did make him feel happy to spend the time in the King's presence.

Indeed, he had to admit that he was practically as bad as some of the King's rebel subjects who openly said it was useless to attend the audiences, for that the King never would be influenced by the appeals made to him. He had never reflected upon the dishonor he was doing the King, nor upon the occasion he was giving the rebels to ridicule the whole affair.

I encountered in the course of the day several other members of the deputation, and found that he fairly represented the feelings of the greater number, though some few agreed in all I said, and told me that it had long been to them a source of pain and trouble to see so little real importance attached to the weekly audience.

Many expedients had been tried to induce sincerity and a sense of reality in the minds of their fellow-subjects,

but hitherto with but little permanent good result. Sometimes indeed the chief man would, a few days previously, announce some especial matter which would form the subject of the next audience, and would urge upon the people to keep it in mind, but it rarely produced any good result.

I left the locality much wondering at the strange habits of the people so *utterly opposed* to my home experience.—
The Freeman.

YOU CANNOT PASS THIS WAY AGAIN.

BREAKFAST was not quite ready, and while waiting, Mary took up a paper for a minute, and her eye fell upon these words :

“ A good Quaker was wont to say, ‘ I expect to pass through this world but once. If, therefore, there may be any kindness I can show, or any good that I can do to my fellow-beings, let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.’ ”

Mary read the paragraph twice over, and it made a deep impression on her heart. She took her seat at the table thoughtfully, and she wondered, as she glanced up at the already wearied face of her mother, whether she had not let many golden opportunities slip, never to return. She could not go that way again. But here was a long bright holiday she had proposed to spend in self-amusement. Indeed, she had kept herself awake an hour or more in planning the day’s enjoyment, intending to fill it as full as she could.

Now these words, “ I shall not pass this way again,” haunted her mind, and awakened quite a new train of thought. What if that mother’s cheek should grow paler

and paler, her cough deeper, and her thin hands be finally folded away forever on her silent heart. The thought was startling and terrible. O what bitterness of regret she would feel that she had lightened her burdens so little ! For this day at least, she would do what she could.

"Mother," she said, when breakfast was over, "you have been looking for a spare day to run over to Grafton and see Aunt Mabel, and now is your chance. I mean to take the helm to-day," she continued pleasantly.

"Not to-day, Mary, of all days, when there is so much work to be done."

"Yes, mother, this is just the day. I have nothing else to do but take your place. You shall see to-night how well I have filled it."

Mary's persuasions prevailed, and the mother spent a long, bright summer day visiting with a beloved invalid sister, to whom her visit was indeed a joyful surprise. It "did good like a medicine" to both mother and sister, while the gain to Mary herself was a hundred-fold greater.
—*The Child's World*.



"THANKSGIVING ANN."

IN the kitchen doorway, underneath its arch of swaying vines and dependent purple clusters, the old woman sat, tired and warm, vigorously fanning her face with her calico apron. It was a dark face, surmounted by a turban, and wearing, just now, a look of troubled thoughtfulness not quite in accordance with her name—a name oddly acquired from an old church anthem that she used to sing somewhat on this wise :—

"Thanksgivin' an'—"

"Johnny, don't play dar in de water, chile!"

"Thanksgivin' an'—"

"Run away now, Susie, dearie."

"Thanksgivin' an'—"

"Take care dat bressed baby! Here's some gingebread for him."

"Thanksgivin' an' de voice of melody."

You laugh! But looking after all these little things was her appointed work, her duty; and she spent the intervals in singing praise. Do many of us make better use of our spare moments?

So the children called her Thanksgiving Ann; her other name was forgotten, and Thanksgiving Ann she would be, now, to the end of her days. How many these days had already been, no one knew. She had lived with Mr. and Mrs. Allyn for years, whether as mistress or servant of the establishment they could scarcely tell; they only knew that she was invaluable. She had taken a grandmotherly guardianship of all the children, and had a voice in most matters that concerned the father and mother, while in the culinary department she reigned supreme.

The early breakfast was over. She had bestowed unusual care upon it, because an agent of the Bible Society, visiting some of the country places for contributions, was to partake of it with them. But while she was busy with a final batch of delicate waffles, the gentleman had pleaded an appointment, and, taking hasty leave of his host and hostess, had departed, unobserved from the kitchen windows; and Thanksgiving Ann's "Bible money" was still in her pocket.

"Didn't ask me, nor give me no chance. Just's if, 'cause a pusson's old an' colored, dey didn't owe de Lord nuffin' an' wouldn't pay it if dey did," she murmured when the state of the case became known.

However, Silas, the long-limbed, untiring, and shrewd, who regarded the old woman with a curious mixture of patronage and veneration, had volunteered to run after the vanished guest, and “catch him if he was anywhere this side of Chainy.” And even while Thanksgiving sat in the doorway the messenger returned apparently unwearied by his chase.

“Wa-ll, I come up with him—told ye I would—and give him the three dollars. He seemed kind of flustered to have missed such a nugget; and he said ’twas a gineros jonation—equal to your master’s. Which proves,” said Silas, shutting one eye, and appearing to survey the subject meditatively with the other, “that some folks can do as much good just off-hand as some other folks can do with no end of pinchin’ an’ screwin’ beforehand.”

“Think it proves dat folks dat don’t have no great ’mount can do as much in a good cause by thinkin’ ’bout it a little aforehand, as other folks will do dat has more, and puts der hands in der pockets when de time comes. I believe in systematics ’bout such things, I does”; and with an energetic bob of her head, by way of emphasizing her words, old Thanksgiving walked into the house.

“Thanksgivin’ an’ the voice of melody,”

she began in her high, and weird voice. But the words died on her lips; her heart was too burdened to sing.

“Only three dollars out’n all der ’bundance!” she murmured to herself. “Well, mebbe I oughtn’t to judge; but then I don’t judge, I *knows*. Course I *knows*, when I’s here all de time, and sees de good clo’es an’ de grand carr’ages, an’ de musics, an’ de fine times—folks an hosses an’ tables all provided for, an’ de Lord of glory lef’ to take what happens when de time comes, and no prep’ration at all! Sure ’nough, He don’t need der help. All de world is his; and he can send cloe’s to his naked, an’

bread to his hungry, an' Bibles to his heathen, if dey don't give a cent; but den dey're pinchin' an' starvin' der own dear souls. Well—'t ain't *my* soul! But I loves 'em—I loves 'em, an' dey're missin' a great blessin'."

These friends, so beloved, paid little attention to the old woman's opinion upon that she called "systematics in givin'."

"The idea of counting up all one's income, and setting aside a fixed portion of it for charity, and then calling only what remains one's own, makes our religion seem arbitrary and exacting; it is like a tax," said Mr. Allyn, one day; "and I think such a view of it ought by all means to be avoided. I like to give freely and gladly of what I have when the time comes."

"If ye hain't give so freely an' gladly for Miss Susie's new necklaces an' yer own new dresses dat ye don't have much when de time comes," interposed Thanksgiving Ann.

"I think one gives with a more free and generous feeling *in that way*," pursued the lady, without seeming to heed the interruption. "Money laid aside beforehand has only a sense of duty and not much feeling about it; besides, what difference can it make, so long as one does give what they can when there is a call?"

"I wouldn't like to be provided for *dat way*," declared Thanksgiving. "Was, once, when I was a slave, 'fore I was de Lord's free woman. Ye see, I was a young no-count gal, not worf thinkin' much 'bout; so my ole marse he lef' me to take what happened when de time come. An' so sometimes I happened to get a dress, an' some times a pair of ole shoes, an' sometimes I didn't happen to get nuffin, an' den I went barefoot; an' dat's jist de way—"

“Why, Thanksgiving, that’s not reverent!” exclaimed Mrs. Allyn, shocked at the comparison.

“Jist what I thought,—didn’t treat me with no kind of rev’rence,” answered Thanksgiving.

“Well, to go back to the original subject, all these things are mere matters of opinion. One person likes one way best; and another person, another,” said the lady, smilingly, as she walked from the room.

“’Pears to me it’s a matter of which way de Master likes best,” observed the old woman, setting her turban. But there was no one to hear her comment, and affairs followed their accustomed routine. Meanwhile, out of her own little store, she carefully laid aside one-eighth. “’Cause if dem ole Israelites was tol’ to give one-tenth, I’d jist like to frow in a little more, for good measure. Talk ’bout it’s bein’ like a tax to put some away for such things! ’Clare! I get studyin’ what each dollar mus’ do, till I get ’em so loadened up wid prayin’s an’ thinkin’s dat I mos’ b’lieve dey weigh double when dey docs go.”

“‘O de Lamb! de lovin’ Lamb!
De Lamb of Calvary!
De Lamb dat was slain, an’ lives again,
An’ intercedes for me!’”

And now another call had come.

“Came, unfortunately, at a time when we were rather short,” Mrs. Allyn said, regretfully. “However, we gave what we could,” she added. “I hope it will do good, and I wish it were five times as much.”

Old Thanksgiving shook her head over that cheerful dismissal of the subject. She shook it many times that morning, and seemed intensely thoughtful, as she moved slowly about her work.

“S’pose I needn’t fret ’bout other folks’ duty—dat ain’t none o’ my business; yas ’tis, too, ’cause dey’s good

to me, an' I loves 'em. 'Taint like 's if dey didn't call darselves His, neither."

Mr. Allyn brought in a basket of beautiful peaches, the first of the season, and placed them on the table by her side.

"Aren't those fine, Thanksgiving? Let the children have a few, if you think best; but give them to us for dinner."

"Sartain, I'll give you all dar is," she responded, surveying the fruit.

Presently came the pattering of several pairs of small feet; bright eyes espied the basket, and immediately arose a cry:

"Oh how nice! Thanksgiving Ann, may I have one?"

"And I?"

"And I, too?"

"Help yourselves. dearies," answered the old woman, composedly, never turning to see how often or to what extent her injunction was obeyed. She was seated in the doorway again, busily sewing on a calico apron. She still sat there when, near the dinner hour, Mrs. Allyn passed through the kitchen, and, a little surprised at its coolness and quietness at that hour, asked wonderingly:

"What has happened, Thanksgiving? Haven't decided upon a fast, have you?"

"No, honey; thought I'd give ye what I happened to have when de time come," said Thanksgiving Ann, coolly holding up her apron to measure its length.

It seemed a little odd, Mrs. Allyn thought. But then old Thanksgiving needed no oversight; she liked her little surprises now and then, too, and doubtless she had something all planned and in course of preparation; so the lady went her way, more than half expecting an especially tempting board because of her cook's apparent carelessness

that day. But when the dinner-hour arrived, both master and mistress scanned the table with wide open eyes of astonishment, so plain and meagre were its contents, so unlike any dinner that had ever before been served in that house.

"What has happened, my dear?" asked the gentleman, turning to his wife.

"I do not know," she replied, with a questioning glance at Thanksgiving.

"Dat's all de col' meat dar was—sorry I didn't have no more," she said, half apologetically.

"But I sent home a choice roast this morning," began Mr. Allyn wonderingly, "and you have no potatoes, either—nor vegetables of any kind!"

"Laws, yes! but den a body has to think 'bout it a good while aforehand to get a roast cooked, an' jist the same wid 'taters; an' I thought I'd give ye what I happened to have when de time come, an' I didn't happen to have much of nuffin.' 'Clare! I forgot de bread!' and, trotting away, she returned with a plate of cold corn-cake.

"No bread!" murmured Mrs. Allyn.

"No, honey; used it all up for toast dis mornin'. Might have made biscuit or muffins, if I had planned for 'em long enough, but that kind o' makes a body feel 'sif dey had to do it, an' I wanted to get dinner for yer all out o' my warm feelin's when de time come."

"When a man has provided bountifully for his household, it seems as if he might expect to enjoy a small share of it himself, even if the preparation does require a little trouble," remarked Mr. Allyn, impatiently, but still too bewildered at such an unprecedented state of affairs to be thoroughly indignant.

"Cur'us how things make a body think of Bible verses," said Thanksgiving musingly. "Dar's dat one 'bout 'who

giveth us all things richly to enjoy,' an' 'what shall I render to de Lord for all his benefits to'ards me?' Dar! I didn't put on dem peaches!"

"Has Thanksgiving suddenly lost her senses?" questioned the gentleman, as the door closed after her.

"I suspect there is a 'method in her madness'" replied his wife, a faint smile crossing her lips.

The old woman returned with the basket, sadly despoiled of its morning's contents, but she composedly bestowed the remainder in a fruit dish.

"Dat's all. The childrons eat a good many, an' dey was used up one way an' 'nother. I'se sorry dar ain't no more, but I hopes ye'll 'joy what dar is, an' I wishes 'twas five times as much."

A look of sudden intelligence flashed into Mr. Allyn's eyes; he bit his lip for a moment, and then asked quietly:

"Couldn't you have laid aside some for us, Thanksgiving?"

"Well, dar now! s'pose I could," said the old servant, relenting at the tone. "B'lieve I will next time. Allers kind o' thought de folks things belonged to had de best right to 'em; but I'd heard givin' whatever happened was so much freer an' lovin'er way o' servin' dem ye love best, dat I thought I'd try it. But it does 'pear's if dey fared slim, an' I 'spects I'll go back to de ole plan o' systematics."

"Do you see, George?" questioned the wife, when they were again alone.

"Yes, I see. An object-lesson with a vengeance!"

"And if she should be right, and our careless giving seems anything like this?" pursued Mr. Allyn, with a troubled face.

"She is right, Fanny; is doesn't take much argument to show that. We call Christ our King and Master; believe that every blessing we have in this world is his direct gift,

and all our hopes for the world to come are in Him. We profess to be not our own, but his; to be journeying toward his royal city, and that his service is our chief business here; and yet strangely enough, we provide lavishly for our own appareling, entertainment, and ease, and apportion nothing for the interests of his Kingdom or the forwarding of his work, but leave that to any chance pence that may happen to be left after all our wants and fancies are gratified. It doesn't seem like very faithful or loving service," Mr. Allyn answered, gravely. "I have been thinking in that direction occasionally, lately, but have been too indolent, careless, or selfish to come to a decision and make any change."

There was a long talk over that dinner-table—indeed, it did not furnish opportunity for much other employment; and that afternoon the husband and wife together examined into their expenses and income, and set apart a certain portion as sacred unto their Lord—doing it somewhat after Thanksgiving's plan of "good measure." To do this they found required the giving up of some needless indulgences—a few accustomed luxuries. But a cause never grows less dear on account of the sacrifice we make for it, and as these two scanned the various fields of labor in deciding what to bestow here and what there, they awoke to a new appreciation of the magnitude and glory of the work, and a new interest in its success—the beginning of that blessing pronounced upon those who "sow beside all waters."

Mrs. Allyn told Thanksgiving of their new arrangement, and concluded, laughingly, though the tears stood in her eyes:

"So you see we have adopted the 'systematic' plan, too; and you needn't starve us for supper, Thanksgiving Ann, you dear, faithful old soul!"

Silas heard of the change in that mysterious way in which he contrived to hear of everything that happened anywhere within a circuit of ten miles of him, and coming to the old colored woman that evening, as, with face of content, she occupied once more her favorite seat in the doorway, he launched forth on the subject at once :

"An' now I s'pose you're satisfied."

"I'se 'mazin' glad," said Thanksgiving, looking up brightly ; "but *satisfied*—dat's a long, deep word, an' de Bible says it'll be when we 'wake in His likeness.' "

"Wa-ll, now I don't perfess none of these kind of things," said Silas, standing on one foot and swinging the other, "but I don't mind tellin' ye that I think your way 's right, an' I don't b'lieve nobody ever lost nothin' by what they give to God ; 'cause He's pretty certain to pay it back with compound interest to them, you see."

"Mebbe so; but don't ye think, Silas Ridgelow, dat it's a drefful mean way to offer a little gift to yer best an' dearest friend—a calk'latin' dat He'll pay back more ?"

"Wa-ll, ye see, folks don't always feel right," observed Silas, dropping dexterously on the other foot.

"No, dey don't. When every body feels right, an' does right, dat'll be de millennium. Does yer know dar's a prophecy 'bout de time when even de bells of de hosses shall hab 'holiness to de Lord' on 'em ? Don't know what dat means, 'less 't is dat de rich folks' carr'ages behind de hosses shall be goin' on his arrands, an' carryin', part of de time, "de least of dese, His 'brederin'. Guess de lovin' 'll have got so strong den dar'll be no thinkin' 'bout prayin'," said the old woman, musingly. "Well, I'se glad of de faint streak of dat day dat's come to dis house !" And she went in with her old song upon her lips :

"Thanksgivin' an' de voice of melody."

—By KATE W. HAMILTON.

"CHEER HIM! CHEER HIM!"



T a fire in a large city, while the upper stories of a lofty dwelling were wrapped in smoke, and the lower stories all aglow with flame, a piercing shriek told the startled firemen that there was some one still in the building in peril. A ladder was quickly reared, until it touched the heated walls, and driving through the flames and smoke a brave young fireman rushed up the rounds on his errand of mercy. Stifled by smoke he stopped and seemed about to descend. The crowd was in agony, as a life seemed lost, for every moment of hesitation seemed an age. While this shivering fear seized every beholder, a voice cried out, "Cheer him! cheer him!" and a wild "hurrah" burst from the excited spectators. As the cheer reached the fireman he started upward through the curling smoke, and in a few moments was seen coming down with a child in his arms. The cheer did the work. How much we can do to help the brave ones who are struggling with temptation, or almost fainting in their efforts to do good to others. Don't find fault with your brother in his trial, but cheer him. Give him a word that shall urge him on the way, and if you can't help in any other way give him a cheer.

INTO THE SUNSHINE.

"I wish father would come home."



The voice that said this had a troubled tone, and the face that looked up was very sad.

"Your father will be angry," said an aunt who was sitting in the room with a book in her hand. The boy raised

himself from the sofa, where he had been lying in tears for half an hour, and with a touch of indignation in his voice, answered,

"He'll be sorry, not angry. Father never gets angry."

For a few moments the aunt looked at the boy half curiously, and let her eyes fall again upon the book that was in her hand. The boy laid himself down upon the sofa again, and hid his face from sight.

"That's father, now!" He started up after the lapse of nearly ten minutes, as the sound of a bell reached his ears, and went to the room door. He stood there for a little while, and then came slowly back, saying with a disappointed air,

"It isn't father. I wonder what keeps him so late. (I wish he would come!"

"You seem anxious to get deeper into trouble," remarked the aunt, who had been only in the house for a week, and who was neither very amiable, nor very sympathizing toward children. The boy's fault had provoked her, and she considered him a fit subject for punishment.

"I believe, Aunt Phebe, that you'd like to see me whipped," said the boy a little warmly. "But you won't."

"I must confess," replied Aunt Phebe, "that I think a little wholesome discipline of the kind you speak of would not be out of place. If you were my child I am very sure you wouldn't escape."

"I'm not your child; I don't want to be." Father is good, and loves me."

"If your father is so good, and loves you so well, you must be a very ungrateful, or a very inconsiderate boy. His goodness doesn't seem to have helped you much."

"Hush, will you!" ejaculated the boy, excited to anger by this unkindness of speech in his aunt.

"Phebe?" It was the boy's mother who spoke now for the first time. In an undertone she added—

"You are wrong. Richard is suffering quite enough, and you are doing him harm rather than good."

Again the bell rang, and the boy left his seat on the sofa, and went to the sitting room door.

"It's father!" and he went gliding down stairs.

"Ah, Richard!" was the kindly greeting, as Mr. Gordon took the hand of his boy. "But what's the matter, my son? You don't look happy."

"Won't you come in here?" And Richard drew his father into the library. Mr. Gordon sat down still holding Richard's hand.

"You are troubled, my son; what has happened?"

The eyes of Richard filled with tears as he looked into his father's face. He tried to answer, but his lips quivered. Then he turned away, and opening the door of the cabinet brought out the fragments of a broken statuette, which had been sent home only the day before, and set them on a table before his father, over whose countenance came instantly a shadow of regret.

"Who did this, my boy?" was asked in an even voice.

"I did it."

"How?"

"I threw my ball in there once—only once, in forgetfulness."

A little while Mr. Gordon sat controlling himself, and collecting his disturbed thoughts. Then he said cheerfully,

"What is done, Richard, can't be helped. Put the broken pieces away. You have had trouble enough about it, I can see, and reproof enough for your thoughtlessness, so I shall not add a word to increase your pain."

"O father!" and the boy threw his arms about his father's neck.

Five minutes later, and Richard entered the sitting-room with his father. Aunt Phebe looked up for two shadowed faces, but she did not see them. She was puzzled.

"That was very unfortunate," she said, a little while after Mr. Gordon came in. "It was such an exquisite work of art."

Richard was leaning against his father when his aunt said this. Mr. Gordon only smiled, and drew his arms closely around his boy.

Mr. Gordon threw upon his sister a look of warning, but it was unheeded.

"I think Richard was a very naughty boy."

"We have settled all that, Phebe," was the mild but firm answer of Mr. Gordon; "and it is one of our rules to get into the sunshine as quick as possible."

A TALK ON THE BOAT.

It was a cool October night, too cool to be on deck.

The steamer was full, but not crowded, and the saloon was comfortable. The passengers were settling themselves in little groups, according to the principle of elective affinity. I saw but one face I knew—that of a lady, of thirty, perhaps. Once or twice I had seen her in church, and had been struck with the quiet, sad earnestness of her manner. When I saluted her she pointed to a seat by her side, and said, "I want to talk with you."

"I shall be most happy," was the reply; "what is it you wish to talk about?"

"About myself; I am not a happy Christian."

"That is sad. Why not?"

"I don't know. I suppose because I do not live as devotedly as I ought."

"A Christian ought to be happy. Are you sure you are a Christian?"

"No; and that is just what's the matter."

"How long have you been a Church member?"

"Ever since I was a young girl."

"Did you not think you were a Christian then?"

"Yes, I believe so—of course I did. But I knew very little about it then. Sometimes I think I am yet. Sometimes I have a joy and a peace that are very delightful. But these are very infrequent, and do not last long. They are *only* moments, and I want to feel so all the time. It seems to me as if I *ought* to. Can I? Ought I?"

"I don't know about the *feeling*. I only know the *fact* that the Christian life should shine more and more unto the perfect day."

"Yes; so I think. But mine doesn't."

"How can it unless you know that you are a Christian?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, How can you rejoice in Christ your Saviour, unless you know that you have a Saviour? How can you be grateful for sins forgiven, unless you know that your sins *are* forgiven? How can you triumph over evil in Christ's strength unless you know that you *have* that strength? How—"

"But how can I know these things?"

"Easily enough. 'These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may *know* that ye *have* eternal life.' And again, 'God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son; and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.'"

"What does that mean—that about the blood?"

"What does it mean when it is said that a soldier sheds his blood for his country?"

"That he dies for it."

"Yes; and so we mean that Christ dies for us."

"How?"

"He bears the penalty of our sins. We sum that all up in the word, 'died,' or 'shed his blood' for us."

"For whom does he do this?"

"For all that trust in him as such."

"Not without any change in their character and life?"

"Yes, without any change in character and life God *justifieth the ungodly*."

"I know that text: but it doesn't seem to me possible. There surely cannot be any transfusion of moral character?"

"No. But, by his consent and ours, our sins are laid upon him, so that he bears the penalty, and we go free. And more: the righteousness, which he wrought out by his perfect obedience of the law of God, is reckoned to our account, and so we have a title—a sure title—to happiness, and holiness, and heaven."

"But how can one man take the place of another in such a relation?"

"One man cannot, but the God Man can; and God tells us that he *does*. That is enough. The infinitude of his nature renders both his sufferings and his obedience of infinite value, sufficient to atone for the sins of all the world, or of a thousand worlds."

"But how can I be sure that he will save *me*?"

"Whom does he save?"

"Them that trust in him."

"Do you trust in him?"

"That's just the question. Sometimes I think I do; and then again I have great doubt about it. I do so many things that are wrong, and—"

"Yes; but God *justifieth the ungodly* who trust in Christ."

"I know it says so."

"Yes, and you know it's true, don't you?"

"I suppose I do; yes, I know I do."

"Very well. Now we have found out one thing that you *know* that God justifieth the ungodly who trust in Christ. Now do you trust him?"

"I don't know."

"Do you trust me?"

"What? Yes; but not to save me."

"No, but do you trust me to keep my promises?"

"Yes."

"Still, I am mortal, and may fail from ignorance, or inability, or some other frailty. But if I were perfectly infinite in knowledge and power and goodness, and you knew it, then you would trust me perfectly, wouldn't you?"

"To be sure."

"Well, Jesus is all these. Can't you trust him perfectly?"

"It seems to me as if I could."

"Of course you can. How can you help it? Trust^{rises}, naturally, inevitably, in the heart assured of the trustworthiness of the one trusted. Is he trustworthy?"

"Infinitely."

"Then trust him."

"I will—I do."

"What for?"

"To keep his promise." ..

"What is that promise?"

"To save all that trust him."

"Then you *do* trust him?"

"Yes, I believe I do. I *do*."

"How can you *ever* doubt him?"

"How *could* I?"

"Never do it again."

"It seems now as if I could not; but I am afraid—"

"Don't be afraid. 'Only trust him.' Trust him for the future as well as for the present. *Trust him to keep you trusting.* He attends to both sides of this contract. 'I will make an everlasting covenant with them,' he says, 'that *I will not turn away from them* to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that *they shall not depart from me.*'"

"Where is that?"

"In Jeremiah xxxii. 40."

"Have you quoted it exactly?"

"Exactly."

(Reflecting) "Isn't it wonderful!"

"Wonderful to us; but just like him. God is Love."

"It don't seem that I could ever doubt him again, or that I could ever love him enough."

"Don't doubt him again. Consider that settled, once for all."

"But how is it that I have so often tried so hard to trust him fully, and couldn't do it? Now it seems so easy."

"Trust isn't a thing that can be constrained. It rises spontaneously in the heart on the apprehension of the trustworthiness of Christ. Look at him. Look away from self. That is what that passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews means. *Looking unto Jesus* It is literally *looking away* to Jesus—away from self; away from other reliances; away from cares and work, and whatever hinders entire reliance upon him. Read about him. Study up his character. Meditate upon it. So doing, you *cannot* help trusting him. 'If ye do these things ye shall never fail.'"

Three or four persons had drawn their chairs nearer, and were listening intently. Presently one of them spoke:

"Is that what is meant by assurance?"

"Yes, the best kind of assurance, the assurance of faith."

"Why is this the best kind of assurance?"

"Because every one may have it, and ought to have it; from the very beginning of the Christian life."

"Yes, I see how that is. And one can grow in it, too, as long as one lives, as he comes to know Christ better."

"Of course."

"That is a good thought to go to bed with."

"Yes, but it isn't new:

"Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so,
Little ones to him belong;
They are weak, but he is strong."

Another one quoted solemnly, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose heart is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee."

And so we went quietly to our rooms, glad because of the communion of saints.—*By* JOHN B. TOMSON, D.D.

A TENDER-HEARTED SPORTSMAN.

SPORTSMEN in foreign lands, like Gordon Cummings, are generally merciless in their butchery of birds and beasts. But an English officer in India tells how his love of sport was completely destroyed, in part by the influence of a native guide, who held animal life to be sacred, and in part by the extraordinary affection of the animals for each other.

One day, when walking with his guide, he shot one of a pair of cranes that flew up from a river.

"Stop," said the guide, "and see what the mate will do."

He stopped and looked. The mate alighted by the dead body, flew up, returned, flew up again, returned again, ex-

hibiting grief and affection such as the sportsman had not dreamed of. "It," he says, "penetrated me beyond expression, as I stood, half stolid outwardly, and wholly ashamed and grieved inwardly."

That night, while the guide was sleeping, the sportsman took his double-barrelled gun, dear to him from the service of many years in England, and dropped it, with all his ammunition, into a deep pool of the stream, where he had shot the crane. He felt that the act was a kind of atonement for his thoughtless murder.



IS WINE A BLESSING?

I was invited to dine with a clergyman who is now Bishop of Carlisle, and we had a discussion for about two hours. A titled lady was present, and she helped him. I was alone, and had to bear the whole brunt of the battle in the scriptural argument.

"The Bible permits the use of wine," said he.

"Very well," said I, "suppose it does?"

"The Bible sanctions the use of wine."

"Very well, suppose it does?"

"Our Saviour made wine."

"I know he did."

"Why, we thought you were prepared to deny this."

"I do not deny it. I can read."

"Wine is spoken of in the Bible as a blessing."

I replied, "There are two kinds of wine spoken of in the Bible."

"Prove it."

"I do not know that I can, but I will tell you what it is, the w-i-n-e that is spoken of as a 'blessing' is not the

same-w-i-n-e that is a 'mockery,' and the w-i-n-e that is to be drunk in the kingdom of heaven cannot be the w-i-n-e of the wrath of God. So that, although I cannot prove it learnedly, I know it is so.

"Now, there are others who go further than I can go; but you will please let me go just so far as I can understand it, and if I cannot go any further don't find fault with me. I hold that the Bible permits total abstinence; and I would rather search the Bible for permission to give up a lawful gratification for the sake of my weak-headed brother, who stumbles over my example into sin, than to see how far I can follow my own propensities without committing sin, and bringing condemnation upon any one's soul."

Another gentleman who came to me for a long talk, said, "I have a conscientious objection to teetotalism, and it is this: Our Saviour made wine at the marriage of Cana in Galilee."

"I know he did,"

"He made it because they wanted it."

"So the Bible tells us."

"He made it of water."

"Yes."

"Well, he performed a miracle to make that wine."

"Yes."

"Then he honored and sanctified wine by performing a miracle to make it. Therefore," said he, "I feel that if I should give up the use of wine I should be guilty of ingratitude, and should be reproaching my Master."

"Sir," said I, "I can understand how you should feel so: but is there nothing else that you put by, which our Saviour has honored?"

"No, I don't know that there is."

"Do you eat barley bread?"

"No," and then he began to laugh.

"And why?"

"Because I don't like it."

"Very well, sir," said I, "our Saviour sanctified barley bread just as much as he ever did wine. He fed five thousand people on barley loaves manufactured by a miracle. You put away barley bread from the low motive of not liking it. I ask you to put away wine from the higher motive of bearing the infirmity of your weaker brother, and so fulfilling the law of Christ." I wish to say that that man signed the pledge three days afterward.—*By* JOHN B. GOUGH.

"NOT LOST, BUT GONE BEFORE."

THE sun shone softly down upon the Hillside Cemetery, where Mr. Bell and his children were standing amid the fresh clover, strewing a new-made grave with roses and violets from their garden. It was only a little mound, and the weeping mother sat at its head mourning for her youngest born.

"Papa," said Arthur, "where *is* heaven, that my little brother has gone to? It is not up in the sky, for I can't see any thing there." The little boy looked sorrowfully up into the far-off blue, and then turned to his father for a reply.

"Heaven is not in sight, Arthur," answered his father. "We cannot tell where it is. It might be very near without our being able to see it with our eyes."

"But, papa," said Helen, "if heaven is near, isn't it strange that Willie cannot just come back one minute to tell us he is happy?"

"Yes, dear," said Mr. Bell, "it is all strange to us. We can only trust our Father in heaven about it, and wait till

we go to him. If we love him here we shall be where he is hereafter, and with dear little Willie too, I think."

They lingered awhile beside the precious grave, and then turned homeward through the pleasant cemetery grounds. As they passed a little pond fringed with flowering shrubs, Mr. Bell said to his wife, Anna, let us sit down beside this pond while I tell the children that parable of Mrs. Gatty's which sister Alice read to us—"Not lost, but gone before."

"O yes," said their mother, "I should like to hear you."

Mr. Bell placed his wife upon a rustic seat and sat down by her side, with Arthur on his knee and Helen at his feet.

"This parable," said he, "tries to teach us how near heaven may be to earth, and how the holy people may remember us and know where we are, and yet not be able to return or speak to us. I will tell you all I can remember of it.

"Once there was a beautiful pond in the center of a wood. Trees and flowers were growing about it, birds sang and insects hummed about it. Under the water, too, there was a little world of beings. Fishes and little creatures that live in water filled it full of busy life. Among them was the grub of a dragon-fly, with a large family of brothers and sisters."

"What is a dragon-fly?" interrupted Arthur.

"It's just a darning-needle," said Helen.

"Yes, you children call it a darning-needle," said their father; "that beautiful swift creature, with a long glittering blue-and-green body and brilliant gauzy wings. Now, before he became a dragon-fly, darting through the air and flashing back the sunshine, he was a dark scaly grub, and lived down in the forest pond. He and his family were

born there, and knew no other world. They spent their time in roving in and out among the plants at the bottom of the water in search of food.

"But one day this grub began to talk among his mates about the frog. 'Every little while,' said he, 'the frog goes to the side of the water and disappears. What becomes of him when he leaves this world? What can there be beyond?'

"'You idle fellow,' replied another grub, 'attend to the world you are in and leave the "beyond" to those that are there!' So said all his relations, and the curious grub tried to forget his questionings. But he could not do it; so one day, when he heard a heavy splash in the water and saw a great yellow frog swim to the bottom, he screwed up his courage to ask the frog himself.

"'Honored frog,' said he, approaching that dignified personage as meekly as possible, 'permit me to inquire what there is beyond the world?'

"'What world do you mean?' said the frog, rolling his goggle eyes.

"'This world, of course; our world,' answered the grub.

"'This pond, you mean,' remarked the frog, with a sneer.

"'I mean the place we live in; I call it the world,' cried the grub with spirit.

"'Do you, indeed!' rejoined the frog. 'Then what is the place you don't live in; the "beyond" the world, eh?'

"'That is just what I want you to tell me,' replied the grub briskly.

"'Well, then,' said froggy, 'it is dry land.'

"'Can one swim about there?' asked the grub.

"'Dry land is not water, little fellow,' chuckled the

frog: 'that is just what it is not.'

" 'But tell me what it is,' persisted the grub.

" 'Well, then, you troublesome creature,' cried the frog, 'dry land is something like the bottom of this pond, only it is not wet, because there is no water.'

" 'Really,' said the grub, 'what is there, then?'

" 'They call it air,' replied the frog. 'It is the nearest approach to nothing.'

" Finding that he could not make the grub understand, the good natured frog offered to take him on his back up to the dry land, where the grub might see for himself. The grub was delighted. He dropped himself down upon the frog's back and clung closely to him while he swam up to the rushes at the water's edge. But the moment he emerged into the air the grub fell reeling back into the water, panting and struggling for life. 'Horrible!' cried he, as soon as he had rallied a little: 'There is nothing but death beyond this world. The frog deceived me. I cannot go there, at any rate!'

" Then the grub told his story to his friends, and they talked a great deal about the mystery, but could arrive at no explanation.

" That evening the yellow frog appeared again at the bottom of the pond. .

" 'You here!' cried the startled grub. 'You never left this world at all, I suppose.'

" 'Clumsy creature,' replied the frog, 'why did you not cling to my back? When I landed on the grass you were gone.'

" The grub related his death-like struggle, and added, 'Since there is nothing but death beyond this world, all your stories about going there must be false.'

" 'I forgive your offensive remarks,' said the frog, gravely, 'because I have learned to-day the reason of your

tiresome curiosity. As I was hopping about in the grass on the edge of the pond, I saw one of your race slowly climbing up the stalk of a reed. Suddenly there appeared a rent in his scaly coat, and after many struggles there came out of it one of those radiant dragon-flies that float in the air I told you of. He lifted his wings out of the carcase he was leaving, and when they had dried in the sunshine he flew glittering away. I conclude that you grubs will do the same thing by and by.'

"The grub listened with astonishment and distrust, and swam off to tell his friends. They decided that it was impossible, nonsense, and the grub said he would think no more about it. He hurried restlessly about in the water hunting for prey, and trying to forget. But not long after he began to be sick, and a feeling he could not resist impelled him to go upward. He called to his relations and said :

"'I must leave you, I know not why. If the frog's story of another world is true, I solemnly promise to return and tell you.'

"His friends accompanied him to the water's edge, where he vanished from their sight, for their eyes were fitted to see only in water. All day they watched and waited for his return, but he came no more.

"One of his brothers soon felt the same irresistible impulse upward, and he also promised the sorrowing family that if he should indeed be changed into that glorious creature of which they had heard, he would return and tell them. 'But,' said one, 'perhaps you might not be able to come back.' 'A creature so exalted could certainly do any thing,' replied the departing grub. But he also came not again. 'He has forgotten us,' said one; 'he is dead,' said another; 'there is no other world.'

"And now a third brother felt the same inward necessity driving him upward. He bade his friends farewell, saying, 'I dare not promise to return. If possible, I will; but do not fear in me an altered or a forgetful heart. If that world exists, we may not understand its nature.'

"His companions lingered near the spot where he disappeared, but there was neither sight nor sound of his return. Only the dreary sense of bereavement reminded them that he had once lived. Some feared the future, some disbelieved, some hoped and looked forward still. Ah, if the poor things could only have seen into the pure air above their watery world, they would have beheld their departed friends often returning to its borders. But into the world of waters they could never more enter. The least touch upon its surface, as the dragon-fly skimmed over it with the purpose of descending to his friends, brought on a deadly shock, such as he had felt when, as a water-grub he had tried to come upward into the air. His new wings instantly bore him back.

"And thus divided, yet near—parted, yet united by love—he often hovered about the barrier that separated him from his early companions, watching till they, too, should come forth into the better life. Sweet it was to each new-comer to find himself not alone in his joyous existence, but welcomed into it by those who had gone before. Sweet also to know that even in their ignorant life below, gleams from the wings of the lost ones they had lamented were shining down into their dark abode. O, if they had known, they would neither have feared nor sorrowed so much!"

Mr. Bell sat in silence a few moments after finishing this parable, and then said:

"Do you see how the other world may be out of our sight and hearing, though very real and near?"

"Yes, father, I do," replied Helen. "It makes it seem as if Willie might be close beside us."—*Household Reading.*

DIFFERENT KINDS OF GIVERS.



little boy, who had plenty of cents.. dropped one into the missionary box, laughing as he did so. He had no thought in his heart about Jesus, the heathen, or the missionary. His was a *tin* penny. It was light as a scrap of tin.

Another boy put a penny in, and as he did so looked round, with a self-applauding gaze, as if he had done some great thing. His was a *brass* penny. It was not the gift of a "lowly heart," but of a proud spirit.

A third boy gave a penny, saying to himself, "I suppose I must, because all others do." That was an *iron* penny. It was the gift of a cold hard heart.

As a fourth boy dropped his penny into the box, he shed a tear, and his heart said, "Poor heathen! I'm sorry they are so poor, so ignorant, and so miserable." That was a *silver* penny. It was the gift of a heart full of pity. But there was one scholar who gave his cent. with a throbbing heart, saying, to himself, "For Thy sake, O loving Jesus, I give this penny, hoping that the poor heathen whom Thou lovest will believe in Thee, and become Thy disciples." That was a *golden* penny, because it was the gift of love.

How many of our readers give golden pennies?—*Spirit of Missions.*

LAW, MIRACLE, AND PRAYER.

TWO children, brother and sister, were once crossing the ocean in a steamship. The Captain was a relative, and showed them much kindness. They had never been on board a steamer before. The great engines attracted much of their attention. They used to stand in a safe place, and look down into the engine house, and watch the huge, smooth, regular movements of this colossal thing that propelled the ship. How it did this, they could not understand; and indeed they were too young to have understood any explanation. But as they watched, they were not long in perceiving that there was a fixed order and regularity in the movement. How the whole thing had been set in motion, they could not tell; they had never seen it, except in action; and, at whatever hour of the day they might come to look at it, there it was always moving on, in the same manner, and with the same regularity. They had asked some of the sailors whether it did not rest during the night; and the sailors told them that it kept moving on, in just the same way, all the time they were sleeping.

Now, sometimes these two children used to discuss the question, whether this engine could be stopped, and whether their friend the Captain had any power over its movements. The little girl, who had great faith in the Captain, was sure that he could stop the machine whenever he pleased. She argued that the engine must have been set a going, when the ship started, although she had not seen it done. Besides, at the end of the voyage, would not the Captain have to stop the vessel? and to do that, would he not require to stop the machinery? Now, if he had power to stop it at the end, surely he had power also to

stop it at any time he pleased. Besides, she had asked some of the sailors; and they had told her that the Captain could stop the engine, and that, indeed, once or twice—not often, but once or twice—they had seen him stop it even on the voyage. So she, for her part, believed the sailors.

But the boy who was a little sceptic in his way, was not so sure about it. He did not know when or how the engine had been set a going; perhaps the Captain had nothing to do with that: the machinery had always been moving, since *they* knew anything about it. And how did they know what would happen at the end of the voyage? For anything he knew, the ship might then be stopped, and yet the machinery might keep going on; or perhaps the engine might wear its strength out; or perhaps, if those great fires below had really anything to do with the matter, the Captain, when they were getting near the end of their voyage, might give orders that the fires should be allowed to go out. But that at any moment, in the middle of the voyage, whilst the fires were all burning, and the great machine was in full motion, the Captain could suddenly stop it—this was difficult to believe. How could he stop it? If he were to thrust his arm in, it would only be crushed! Besides, even if he were able, somehow or other, to stop the machinery, it did not follow that he *had* ever interfered with its regular movements. True, a few sailors said they had seen him do so; but even they said they had only seen this once or twice; and perhaps the sailors were mistaken, or perhaps they were even “telling a story.” Yes: on the whole, he thought it more likely the sailors were telling a lie, than that this huge, ponderous engine had ever been suddenly stopped in mid-ocean!

Thus, then, the little boy and girl used to argue the matter; only of course, in their own childish fashion and

language. One day the boy was playing on deck with a large, bright colored ball, when suddenly it bounded over the side of the ship and fell into the sea. He was in great trouble about this, and ran at once to tell his sister, who happened at the moment to be sitting on the Captain's knee. "Oh Captain!" she said, looking up beseechingly into his face, "stop the engines, and get the ball!" The Captain only smiled, and quietly shook his head.

"Oh, Captain!" she said again, "I know you can do it, if only you will; do be kind, and stop the engines!" But the Captain stroking her hair smiled again, and said, "What! stop that great machine and this great ship, for *that*? No; little boys must learn to be more careful of their balls!" He looked and spoke so kindly, that the little girl did not lose her faith in him; but, for all that, she thought it strange that a friend so kind and good to children did not stop the ship when her brother was so vexed about losing his beautiful ball. As for the boy, he was now quite confirmed in his opinion that the Captain either could not stop the engines in mid-ocean, or at least never had done it, and never would do it—whatever a few sailors might say.

One day, however, not long after, as they were both standing together near the Captain, and looking down into the engine-house, they heard a sudden shriek, and then a cry; "Man overboard." Then in a moment they saw the Captain giving a sign; and then they heard the cry, "Stop her;" and then, in another moment, the great engine seemed somehow to get a sudden check, and began, as it were, to pant, and to move slowly, as if it were out of breath; and then presently it came to a stand still, and the ship too, and meanwhile, some one had thrown a life buoy to the poor sailor who had fallen overboard; and there he was, swimming towards the life-buoy; and presently he caught it; and then they drew him in by the rope, and he

was saved. Whereupon the Captain suddenly gave another sign, and the huge engine began once more to move, and in a very little time it was moving at its former speed. Only a few minutes had passed altogether, and there was the machine working away again with the old, ponderous regularity of movement, just as if it had never been and could not be interfered with ! Then the little boy saw, not only that the Captain could at once stop the engine when he pleased, but also that he did stop it, and would stop it, *whenever he thought there was sufficient reason.*

A few days afterwards, as the little girl was standing with a large doll in her arms, looking down into the engine-house, the doll slipped out of her arms and fell into the midst of the machinery, she could not tell where, away out of her sight. She began to cry ; but she thought of her friend the Captain, and was for rushing off at once, to ask him to get her doll for her. But her brother, who had now (with his way of it) become quite a little philosopher, stopped her : " What is the use," said he " of going to the Captain ? Very likely your doll is all crushed to pieces by this time. Besides, the Captain would have to stop the engines, in order to get it ; and do you think a doll lost is like a man overboard ? You should not bother the Captain about such things ! " But the little girl was not to be hindered. She knew the Captain was kind, and she had great faith in what he could do. " Well, he won't be angry with me," she said, " for asking him. He will be sorry that I have lost my doll. He may perhaps be able to get it for me. I need not ask him to stop the engines ; perhaps he may be able to get it without doing that. I can not tell, I can at least ask him." " Very well," says the little philosopher, " you may go, but it is all of no use. I will tell you before hand what he will say to you : Little girls must just learn to be more careful of their

dolls ! ” But the girl persisted and went to her friend, and said, “ Oh, Captain ! it was very careless of me and I am so sorry ; but I have let my doll fall down amongst the engines, and I don’t know where it is. Do you think you could get it for me ? I don’t ask you to stop the engines ; but if it is possible, I wish I could have it again.” And the Captain was greatly pleased with the child’s confidence, and he felt sorry for her loss ; and so he smiled, and said, “ Well, we shall see what can be done.” It was not a very definite promise ; but the little girl had faith in her friend, and believed that he would do what was wise and kind. The loss of the doll might not be a sufficient reason for stopping the engines ; but the fact that the Captain could and did stop the engines for a man overboard might be a sufficient reason why she should trust him in her own trouble. And the Captain went down into the engine-room, and spent some time in looking for the doll. At length, he spied it in an out-of-the-way corner, not much the worse for the fall. It gave him some trouble to reach it, but he took the trouble ; for he knew how much pleasure he would give the child. And the brother and sister waited and watched the engines, and saw that they never stopped. But, after a while, the Captain came back, and said, “ Well, here, you see, is your pretty doll ; but, you know, little girls should be more careful ! ” Then the child kissed and thanked him, and loved him more than ever. But the boy grew jealous, and forgot all his philosophy, and thought that his sister was a “ pet ” of the Captain’s, and he began to quarrel with her, and said, “ Oh yes ; he can take pains and trouble about *your* doll ; but he does not at all care when I lost *my* ball ! ” But he was wrong once more ; for, when they all came ashore at the end of the voyage, the good Captain surprised him by buying for him a larger and more beautiful ball than the one he had lost at sea.

This story is a parable; and, like all other parables, it has its necessary failures of analogy. But perhaps it may help to show that, even in front of the unchanging laws of nature, we may cling to a reasonable faith both in the historical fact of miracles, and in the present power of Prayer.

No one doubts that there once lived in Palestine a man called "Jesus of Nazareth." No one doubts that the four Gospels represent this Jesus as an extraordinary Being. His recorded entrance into the world and final departure from the world are each so unique as to be fairly called "supernatural," meaning by that word that they were altogether *out of the ordinary line of cause and effect in nature*. He is represented also as doing extraordinary works, such as stilling the tempest, turning water into wine, healing the sick by a word, and even bringing back the dead to life, works which it is utterly beyond the power of man to accomplish by means of any known processes or appliances of nature.

Now, there are many who simply refuse to believe these records. With them it is a foregone conclusion that miracles are impossible, or, if not impossible, at least so improbable as to be incredible. They stand in presence of the laws of nature—those mighty wheels which move on with such constant and undeviating order; and they refuse to believe there has ever been a single break in this regularity of movement. They think it far more likely that all stories of miracles are due either to the delusions or falsehoods of men than that the miracles actually happened.

But now, suppose we put the matter thus: "What are the laws of nature?" Are they "laws" which the Creator is bound to obey? Or is not the word "Law" here simply a name for the discovered order according to which God chooses usually to operate in the sphere of nature? Is

there anything to prove that this order never had a beginning, or that it never will have an end? Cannot the Almighty—if He pleases, and when He pleases—deviate from this usual order? Can he not interfere with His own machinery? *Can He not not break the regularity of movement, if He will?*

The Theist answers: This is not a question of what God *can* do, but of what He *has done*. We do not say that miracles are absolutely impossible; we only deny that they have ever happened. We say it is not likely that God would at all deviate from an order which his own perfect wisdom has prearranged; and we further say that no mere testimony is of itself adequate to convince us that He has ever done so.

I reply: But may not the blending of fixed Law and occasional miracle be itself the highest possible manifestation of perfect wisdom?

What if the very wisest thing to be done was to establish a regular order in nature, and then—now and again—to depart from it for certain special and important ends? We may be told that, if we really believe in miracles, we ought even now-a-days to kneel down and pray that paralysis may be cured in a moment, or that our dead may be brought back to life. But we have simply no warrant for asking God to work such miracles merely to meet our own wishes and longing; and therefore we do not offer such prayers. It does not follow, however, that there have been no miracles in the past, because our wishes may not be a "sufficient reason" for working them now. *The Captain may not stop the engines for a boy's ball; but for all that, he may have stopped them to save a man from drowning.* The miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ stand in direct relation to the salvation of perishing humanity. They were not wrought merely to gratify this or that individual, they were manifestations

of Himself as the Saviour of the world. *Our belief in His miracles is therefore not founded on bare testimony.* We have testimony indeed, but we have also the presentation to our minds and hearts of a sufficient reason." The Advent of Christ was a crisis in the world's history. To save mankind from spiritual death, to rescue humanity, struggling in the dark waters of atheism and sin, and to bring it into a state of faith in the Heavenly Father—this we may surely regard as a worthy reason for the miraculous incarnation of the Son of God, for those wondrous works which "manifested forth His glory," and for the Resurrection and Ascension, which proclaimed Him the conqueror of death and the ever-living Saviour of man. In the light of this "sufficient reason" for miracles, we can hold fast our faith in them as historical facts, even in front of the great Order of Nature.

But it may be said: Well, you admit, at any rate, that the age of miracles is now past; and therefore it is a foolish thing to pray for material blessing.

I reply: That to pray for material blessings is not necessarily to ask for a miracle. *A Captain may be so tender-hearted as to give back to a little girl her lost doll; and yet he may not need to stop the engines.* If God is my friend, He will not be angry when I lay my desires before Him. If the Lord Jesus Christ is the Captain and Ruler of the Universe, He may be able to come to my relief in ways of which I know nothing. His miracles have revealed both His power and His love. The miracles were exceptional; but the power and love are abiding. And so, in prayer, I make my appeal to the Divine will. I do not ask for what I know to be a miracle. But I am only as a little child in the presence of a Divine Friend; and, for aught I know, He may be able to grant my request without any deviation from the Order of nature. *It may be that I am*

asking what He can not wisely bestow. But, on the other hand, it *may* be that, in answer to prayer, He can and will come to my help, without working any miracle. And so I cry, "Father, if it be possible!" and there I leave it. Nor need we imagine that those who get their requests are the petted favorites of Heaven. Rather let me believe that if, in response to the prayer of faith, God does not give me what I ask, *He will doubtless give me, by-and-by that which is far better.*—*Congregationalist.*

MAKE SOME ONE HAPPY.

SYDNEY Smith cut the following from a newspaper, and preserved it for himself: When you rise in the morning, say that you will make the day blessed to a fellow-creature. It is easily done. A left-off garment to the man who needs it; a kind word to the sorrowful; an encouraging expression to the despondent; a loaf of bread to the starving—trifles in themselves as light as air—will do, at least for the twenty-four hours. And if you are young, depend upon it, it will tell when you are old; and if you are old, rest assured it will send you gently and happily down the stream of time to eternity. By the most simple arithmetical sum, look at the result; if you send one person away happy through the day, that is 365 in the course of a year; and suppose you live forty years only after you commence that course of medicine, you have made 14,600 persons happy—at all events, for some time.

SITTING DOWN.

THEODORA drew on her gloves as if the action wearied her. Mrs. Gesner was thinking that she did not look strong enough to be sitting up. As the button of Theodora's glove flew off, she repressed the impatient and nervous exclamation that almost uttered itself, bent down and picked up the button, saying, with a smile that tried hard not to be pitiful, "I am so cross now-a-days that I feel wicked all the time."

"Sit still and rest. I've been thinking that I would like to put you to bed and feed you with a spoon."

"Oh, no! I'm not so tired. A brisk walk will rest me," she returned, rising with an effort. "It was midnight when I turned off the gas last night; and I had to be up early this morning to see to father's breakfast. I'm full of business these days."

"This is a busy age," replied Mrs. Gesner, dropping her work and folding her hands. "In an age so full of bustle and racket, so full of doing and so barren in *being*, I wonder how people find time to be still before God and to hear His voice. If He say, 'Hush, be quiet and listen!' they have no ears to hear. The ears are full of human voices. They would not dare to treat another friend so."

"Do you mean me?" asked Theodora, glancing away from the clock.

"I mean you and every other too busy worker. I mean every mother and father, every teacher, every minister, every writer, every woman who has a special work, and every man and woman who has not a special work. I mean every human being who works so hard in serving man that they forget that to hear when God speaks to them is His will above all. He can feed the hungry with-

out human aid ; He can teach the ignorant without using man's poor wisdom ; but when He would speak to His children, He will not speak unless they are willing ' to stop and listen.'"

" He can make us hear through the bustle and racket," said Theodora, uneasily, rubbing the white door-knob with her fingers.

" Yes, if He ordain the bustle and racket. But do you not think that we often make the racket ourselves ?"

Racket ! Her work for Him ! Why did not Mrs. Gesner call it rubbish ?

The pained face and drooping figure were not a pleasant contemplation. Mrs. Gesner found her work prettier to look at.

" Now, my dear, tell me what your plan is for the remainder of the day."

Theodora looked at the clock. It was nearly three o'clock. Her voice was somewhat husky ; perhaps, Mrs. Gesner would think her work a bustle and a racket.

" I must call on Rachel Christopher. She was not at Sunday School last Sunday. I must go to a book-store and find a picture-book for a little lame boy in our block. I must visit an old blind man and read awhile to him. I must call at St. Luke's to see Sarah Merchant. She has been sick there four or five months. I must be home at supper-time to make mother's toast. I must go to prayer-meeting this evening. And then I must come home and finish Minnie's waterproof, and answer three or four letters ; and then—"

" Where is the time for Christ ?" interrupted Mrs. Gesner, gravely and gently.

" It's *all* His time," faltered Theodora, flushing and rubbing the door-knob.

"Oh, it is! You will feel more like crying to-night than praising Him. And, as you cannot fall asleep buying picture-books, visiting hospitals, or reading to a blind man, making a waterproof, or writing letters, you will fall asleep on your knees, with your prayer half uttered, and creep into bed feeling that you have done Him so much service that He does not ask your heart toward Him, or feeling dreadfully wicked because you cannot keep awake while you pray. The sleepy communion with Him at night is the other half of the hurried prayer of the morning."

Theodora looked as if she were hesitating between laughter and tears.

"Can I help it?" she asked, in some vexation.

"Help what? Serving your neighbor and forgetting God?"

"I thought serving my neighbor *was* serving Him," Theodora answered spiritedly.

"So it is, when He bids it so. But He is a tender lover and cares for a return. We may love Him for His own sake, as well as love His brethren for His sake."

"I never thought of that," confessed Theodora. "I thought that He wanted me to keep busy."

"Keep busy about His business;" but not about your own. If He says that you serve Him best with taking no time to study His will, with no time for speaking to Him alone, then, child, go on. You are doing His will. But He spent a whole night in communion with His Father. There were lepers and blind that needed healing; sinners sinning against God that very night. But He left them all to give Himself—every thought, every feeling—wholly to God. And if He, the sinless, needed that, craved that, oh! how much more do we!"

"I thought I was right," murmured Theodora.

"Do you love Him best of all? Do you feel always near Him?"

"No. I'm too wicked, and tried, and criss-cross."

"You treat Him as if He were a very hard master. Suppose, tired as you are, I kept you standing, waiting on me, and would not let you sit down. I would not treat my Bridget as you act as if your Master were treating you."

There was a chair near the door. Theodora glanced at the clock, then dropped into the comfortable and comforting cushions of the chair.

"Do you remember that once, after the people had been three days with the Lord, and He had healed them and taught them, amid great rejoicings, that He would not send them away fasting to their homes, fearing that they might faint by the way?"

"Yes, I know."

"Suppose they had said: 'Oh, no! Thank you, Master, I really can't stop to eat. I don't mind fainting by the way. I want to get home to tell everybody how good you are. I want the neighbors to see that Aaron can speak with loosened tongue, and that Miriam can walk as well as before she was sick. And I want to tell everybody in the town all the gracious words that have come out of your mouth.'"

Theodora smiled. "I don't believe that anybody was so foolish as to run away from the bread that He made for them."

"Nor I, not in those days. So He bade them all *sit down*. Wasn't it pleasant to sit down, and wait, and be ready for His bread? He was not a hard Master then."

Theodora arose, without looking at the clock.

"I will go home and rest awhile," she said.—By JENNIE M. DRINKWATER, in the *Independent*.

THE FENCE STORY.



man who prided himself on his morality, and expected to be saved by it, was constantly saying: "I am pretty well, on the whole. I sometimes get mad and swear, but then I am perfectly honest; I work on Sunday when I am particularly busy, but I give a good deal to the poor, and I never was drunk in my life."

This man hired a canny Scotchman to build a fence around his pasture lot. He gave him very particular directions. In the evening when the Scotchman came in from work, the man said, "Well, Jock, is the fence built, and is it tight and strong?"

"I canna say it is all tight and strong," Jock replied; "but it's a good average fence, anyhow. If some parts are a little weak, other parts are extra strong. I don't know but I may have left a little gap here and there, a yard or so wide; but then I made up for it by doubling the number of rails on each side of the gap. I dare say that the cattle will find it a good fence, on the whole, and will like it, though I canna just say that it is perfect in every part."

"What?" cried the man, not seeing the point; "do you tell me that you built a fence around my lot with weak places and gaps in it? Why, you might as well have built no fence at all. If there is one opening, or a place where an opening can be made, the cattle will be sure to find it, and will go through. Don't you know, man, that a fence must be perfect, or it is worthless?"

"I used to think so," said the dry Scotchman; "but I hear you talk so much about averaging matters with the Lord, it seemed to me that we might try it with the cattle. If an average fence will not do for them, I am afraid an average character will not do in the day of judgment."

A BAD FIRE.

"JONES, have you heard of the fire that burned up that man's house and lot?"

"No, Smith, where was it?"

"Here in the city."

"What a misfortune. Was it a fine house?"

"Yes, a nice house and lot—a good home for any family."

"What a pity! How did the fire take?"

"The man played with fire and thoughtlessly set it himself."

"How silly! Did you say the lot was burned too?"

"Yes, lot and all. All gone slick-clean."

"That's singular. It must have been a terrible hot fire, and then I don't well see how it could burn the lot."

"No, it was not a large fire, nor a very hot fire. Indeed, it was so small that it attracted but little attention."

"But how could such a fire burn up a house and lot? You haven't told me."

"It burned a long time—more than twenty years—and though it seemed to consume very slowly, it wore away about \$150 every year, until it was all gone."

"I can't quite understand you yet. Tell me all about it."

"Well, it was kindled IN THE END OF A CIGAR. The cigar cost him, he himself told me, \$12.50 a month, or \$150 a year, and that, in twenty-one years, would amount to \$3,150, besides all the interest. Now the whole sum wouldn't be far from \$10,000. That would buy a fine house and lot, even in Chicago. It would pay for a large farm in the country."

"Whew! I guess now you mean me, for I have smoked for more than twenty years; but I did not know it cost as

much as that. And I havn't any house of my own. Have always rented—thought I was too poor to own a house. And all because I have been burning it up. What a fool I have been !”

The boys would better never start such a fire which costs so much ; and which, though it might be so easily put out, is yet so likely, if once kindled, to keep burning all their lives.



LITTLE HANNAH'S PRAYER HEARD AND OVERHEARD.

NE Sabbath evening, John Price, after drinking and gambling all day, and having lost the earnings of the week, turned from his companions, and scarcely knowing what he did, took the road homewards. One of them called him to return ; entreated him to have one more game, and added, “ You will be sure to win it all back, you know.”

He stopped,—“ Why, if I could get it back,” said he to himself. “ Come,” said his companions, “ one more game, only one.”

“ No,” said Price, “ I’ve lost all my money, and so I can’t, if I would.” But at that moment it occurred to him that his quarter’s rent, except what was to be made up out of his last week’s work, had been put in a cupboard in the kitchen at home, and if he could get that, he should be sure to win back all he had lost. The money was to be paid the next day ; and hardened as he was, he trembled at what he was going to do, and was terrified lest his wife and children should see him.

He approached the house, then ventured to look in at the window, and perceiving no one, he entered the kitchen,

and went hastily to the cupboard. It was locked, and he felt a momentary relief in the thought that he could not get the money. But again he said to himself, "I shall be sure to win," and hastened softly upstairs to look for the key, thinking he knew where his wife had put it. As he passed the room in which his children slept, he thought he heard a slight noise; and listening, he heard sobs and then a voice. It was poor little Hannah, praying that her father might see the error of his ways, that God would change his heart, and make him a comfort to her mother, and to them all. Her sighs and tears seemed almost to impede her utterance, and when he heard her call him her dear father, and felt how ill he had deserved such a name, he could scarcely forbear groaning aloud, in the anguish of his feelings. He forgot the key, crept to his bedroom, and fell on his knees. He uttered not one word, but the language of the heart is audible in the ears of mercy; and that evening for the first time, it might have been said of him, "Behold, he prayeth."

After some time he went down stairs where Hannah was rocking her little sister to sleep. She started with astonishment. For many months, and even for years, she did not remember seeing her father at home on a Sabbath evening. He went to the children and kissed them both. This was a mark of affection they did not often receive, and Hannah was as much pleased as she was surprised.

"Dear Father," mother will be so glad to see you at home, and we shall be so comfortable. "You will not go out again to-night, will you, father?"

"No, dear," he replied. And as she went to lay the babe on the bed, he heard her say to herself, "Father called me dear."

The return of his wife and boys from public worship Price had been dreading. He knew not how to endure

their looks of amazement; but it was soon over. The children at first looked fearfully at each other, as though their usual Sabbath evening's pleasure was over; for they always sat up later, and told their mother all that happened at the Sabbath School, and what they could remember of the sermons they had heard during the day. Hannah had prepared supper, and there was a nice fire and a clean hearth. Price felt at that moment that if his own character were what it ought to be, he should indeed be happy.

"Father," said Hannah, as she entered the room, "here is a nice new-laid egg. It is my own, and you shall have it, father."

Price could not speak, but he kissed the child, and he saw the tears in her eyes. He thought it was the nicest egg he had ever tasted. When supper was over, Hannah said, "Father, you have not heard me read for a long time."

"Well," said he, "will you read to me something out of your reward-book at the Sabbath School?" He knew that this was the Bible, but had not courage to say so.

Hannah was almost perplexed. She looked first at her father and then at her mother. Two hours ago the sight of a Bible in her hands would have insured oaths which she shuddered to hear.

"Come, dear," said her father, "why don't you fetch it?"

Hannah obeyed, though not without trembling. She read the 51st Psalm. Price hid his face and wept. The first part seemed made on purpose for him. He restrained his feelings sufficiently to say, "Thank you, dear, you are very much improved. Read something else."

She turned to the 163rd Psalm. "Surely God made her choose these two," thought Price. His wife beheld with astonishment the conduct of her husband, and the emotions which appeared to agitate him.

"Hannah, my dear" said she, "you had better be taking the boys to bed." Their mother kissed them, and told them they had been good boys; and then they turned to Hannah, as if to ask if they should go to their father. "Come, dears" said she, "wish father good-night." He kissed them, and they left the room.

"You'll have some additional refreshment, John?" said his wife. "You've had no beer to-night."

"Oh," said he, "I hope I shall never taste beer again."

With unutterable joy she started from her seat, and throwing her arms around his neck, burst into tears. For some minutes they wept together. Price tried to speak, but could not. At length recovering some degree of composure, he seated himself beside her, and hiding his face, told her all the occurrences of the evening.

"Can you ever forgive such a wretch?" said he: "Oh, Hannah, can you?"

"Forgive you! my dear husband," she replied;—"I never loved you half so well nor ever was half so happy before. Don't ask me to forgive you; ask God to forgive you and he will." And then she talked to him of the infinite mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, and again begged him not to ask pardon of her but of Him.

"I have, I have," said he; "but till I heard what our dear child read, I did not think he could ever forgive such a wicked sinner as I am."

"It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, even the chief," said his wife.

"Does the Bible say *all* that? Does it say the *chief*?" he asked, "Indeed it does," she answered. "Then that must mean *me*," said he.

"Let us kneel together, my dear John," said his wife,

"and ask God to fulfil his promise to you." "I cannot pray," said he.

She took his hand and made him kneel down beside her; and in the language of faith and affection, she commended him to the mercy of that God who had long been her Father and Friend. . After thus engaging in prayer, the mind of her husband became more composed; and he expressed the hope that he should never lose the remembrance of this evening.

The change was as permanent as it had been remarkable. From this time his old companions were forsaken, and the ale-house abandoned. To the former he only spoke, to entreat them to return from their wickedness; and the latter he never entered but once, and then it was with his wife, to pay the landlord a debt he had contracted, for some windows broken in an affray with one of his depraved associates in a state of intoxication.



THE UNANSWERABLE ARGUMENT.

ROKES, the blacksmith, was an infidel and scoffer. He was a man of extensive reading, and master of all the ablest infidel writers. He possessed a ready wit, and when he could not talk his opponent down, he would laugh him down. The pastor had often approached him, and had as often been repulsed. As a last resort, he had requested his able and skilful neighbor, a lawyer of piety and talents, to visit Mr. Rokes, and endeavored to convince him. But it was like attempting to reason with a tempest or soothe the volcano.

The following was the manner of his conversion, as related by himself at a prayer-meeting.

"I stand," said Mr. Rokes, "to tell you the story of my conversion." His lips trembled slightly as he spoke, and his bosom heaved with suppressed emotion. "I am as a brand plucked out of the burning. The change in me is an astonishment to myself; it was all brought about by the grace of God, and that unanswerable argument. It was a cold morning in January, and I had just begun my labor at the anvil in my shop, when I looked out and saw Mr. Brown approaching. He dismounted quickly and entered. As he drew near I saw he was agitated. His look was full of earnestness, his eyes were bedimmed with tears. He took me by the hand; his breast heaved with emotion, and with indescribable tenderness he said, 'Mr. Rokes, I am greatly concerned for your salvation—greatly concerned for your salvation,' and he burst into tears. He stood with my hand grasped in his. He struggled to gain self-possession. He often attempted to speak, but not a word could he utter; and finding that he could say no more, he turned, went out of the shop, got on his horse, and rode slowly away.

'Greatly concerned for my salvation!' said I, aloud, and I stood and forgot to bring my hammer down. There I stood with it upraised,—*'greatly concerned for my salvation.'*

I went to the house. My poor, pious wife, whom I had always ridiculed for her religion, exclaimed, 'Why, Mr. Rokes, what is the matter with you?' 'matter enough,' said I, filled with agony and overwhelmed with a sense of sin. 'Old Mr. Brown has ridden two miles this cold morning, to tell me he was greatly concerned for my salvation. What shall I do; what shall I do?'

'I do not know what you can do,' said my astonished wife; 'I do not know what better you can do, than to get on your horse and go and see him. He can give you bet-

ter counsel than I, and tell you what you must do to be saved.' I mounted my horse and went after him. I found him in that same little room where he had spent the night in prayer for my poor soul, where he had shed many tears over such a reprobate as I, and had besought God to have mercy on me.

'I am come' said I to him, 'to tell you that I am greatly concerned for my own salvation.'

'Praised be God!' said the aged man, 'It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, even the chief,' and he began at that same Scripture and preached to me Jesus. We knelt on the floor and prayed together, and did not separate that day till God spoke peace to my soul. I have often been requested to look at the evidence of the truth of religion, but blessed be God, I have the evidence of its truth here, (laying his hand upon his heart,) which nothing can gainsay or resist. I have often been led to look at this and that argument for the truth of Christianity; but I could overturn, and, as I thought, completely demolish and annihilate them all. But I stand here to-night, thankful to acknowledge that God sent an argument to my conscience and heart, which could not be answered or resisted when a weeping Christian came to tell me how greatly concerned he was for my salvation. God taught him that argument when he spent the night before Him in prayer for my soul."—*American Messenger*.

A GENEROUS DEED.



French surgeon in the late war between France and Germany tells of a soldier who did not believe in "looking out for number one."

On October 8th the chloroform began to give out at Metz. A few local druggists had tried to make it, but the product was not fit for use, and the real article was scarce. At the temporary hospital of the redoubt, where I was on duty, we had very little left. As we did not know how long the siege might yet last, it was our urgent duty to be sparing with it. On the morning after the fight at Ladouchamps there was a terrible influx of wounded, and we had our hands full.

A chasseur of the guard is brought into the operating-room with his hand badly shattered. It is found necessary to take off the bone to which the little finger is attached. The man comes in on foot still holding fast his gun, which he carries slung over his back.

"Well, my good friend, we shall have to have a bit of an operation."

"I know it, major; that's what I'm here for."

"Would you like to be made insensible?"

"O dear! yes. I've suffered so much all night that I don't think I could stand it."

"Are you very particular about it?"

"Why, is it very scarce now—that stuff that puts you to sleep?"

"We have scarcely any left."

The chasseur reflected a moment in silence; then, suddenly: "Well, keep it for those who have lost legs or arms; but be quick." He put his poor blue cravat, still bloody, in his mouth, lay down, and held out his hand.

The operation over; "Did it hurt you much?"

"Yes, but what can you do? We poor fellows must help one another."

Yes: that is it: Let us help one another. "Look out for number one," cries Selfishness. "Love one another," says God.—*S. S. Visitor.*

THE BIBLE READING RAILROAD ENGINEER.

“**I** have never met with an accident that was attended with serious results, thank God,” he replied, not in the brawling tone of an oath, but reverently, “and I think that one reason of it comes from the fact that I always carry my Bible in the cab. Do you see it up there?” and he pointed up to the prettily upholstered cab, where just in front of the engineer’s seat, between the steam gauge and the lookout window, on a bracket-like device, a small Bible was held open where the eyes of this Christian engineer could fall upon its pages at any moment.

“I have read the good book from back to back several times at home,” continued he, “and by having it placed here in this manner before me I have been able to commit many passages to memory. Sometimes it has been a wonderful comfort to me; one time in particular, the strength as well as comfort I derived from one glance at a passage on the open page was astonishing.”

“How was that?” I asked, greatly interested.

“Well, madam, it is something I seldom speak of,” he said, handing up his oil-can to the fireman, and wiping his hands on a bunch of cotton waste, “but I don’t mind telling you now,—yes, there is time,” glancing at the pretty clock in the cab.

“You see I was running on the lower end of the road at the time, and my train was an ‘express passenger,’ which came out of the city before nightfall, usually with a dozen or so heavily laden coaches. Perhaps you remember, if you have been over the road so much, where the track crosses the——river, which, you know, is the inlet to the harbor. Being a port of considerable importance,

of course provision has to be made for the shipping to pass above.

"There was a man stationed at this post to signal to the approaching trains whether the bridge was open or not. Yes, it was a dangerous place (the means to avert danger there are better now), but after I had run over the bridge twice a day for eighteen months or more, and had always found everything all right, I came to look upon that point the same as I did upon any other piece of the road.

"My express was a fast train always, and on the night of which I am speaking I was a little behind time, and so running even somewhat faster than usual in order to make up. As I approached the bridge I looked for the signal, as it was second nature for me to do. The flagman gave the customary all right signal, standing as usual on a rock at the point of a curve of the track leading around the river.

"I had no more time than barely to notice that the man was a new hand, in place of 'Lame Jim,' whom I had without a single exception always found at that post, before we came in full view of the bridge. To my horror it was wide open, and a gulf of nearly fifty feet in depth was yawning before me and my ponderous train.

"I glanced up to my open Bible, and my eyes fell upon the word, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' The benumbing sense of utter helplessness that for the instant had pervaded both soul and body as it were, all vanished now, and I became as calm as you see me at this moment.

"You know, madam, that the duties of a locomotive engineer are such that oftentimes he has to decide, (it may be only on a mere movement of his hand, or the kind of a look he gives his fireman) in such a terrible exigency

246 BIBLE READING RAILROAD ENGINEER.

especially, in the shortest conceivable space of time. In this instance I had no time to consider, and if I had, I suppose I should have done exactly as I did, whistle for brakes (it was before air brakes came into use) and reverse my engine.

"The fireman did not need to be told to do his best upon the tender brakes, as he rapidly tightened them up with the whole swinging force of his large body. It was a clean, dry track, everything in good condition, and I think never a train, with like facilities, was brought to a standstill on shorter notice. For that first, almost bewildering instant to me, the belief in the impossibility of escaping that imminent, fearful plunge, so possessed me with a cold feeling like the coils of a snake down my back, that it was with an almost superhuman effort that I mustered muscular force to raise my hand to the whistle valve cord, reach the regulator, or grasp the reversing handle.

"But we came to a dead halt just as the point of the cow-catcher overlapped the frightful chasm! Had the impelling force of that long passenger train carried us a few feet further on, there would have been the worst railroad catastrophe that ever happened in America, and my name would surely have swelled the list of the drowned and mangled ones that would have appeared in the newspapers.

"As it was, the escape never got into the papers at all. The bridge was swung into place so quickly, and we were under way again so soon after the customary stop at the draw, that I suppose that very few of the passengers ever knew of the threatened peril. We were miles away before the reaction came to me as I sat trembling on my seat with the full, apprehending sense of our escape tiding through my brain.

"The flagman? oh, yes, he was drunk. You see there had been a new superintendent chosen, and he had com-

menced business by turning off some of the old employees and putting in new ones. Poor, faithful 'Lame Jim' had been discharged and this fellow installed in his place. He was celebrating his appointment to this responsible post over a jug of rum which was found afterwards in the little signal house near by.

"Jim was reinstated next day, but the Company was so chagrined over the unwarrantable action on the part of the superintendent that the matter was kept as close as possible. I went to the office the next morning and resigned my position: I couldn't bear to run over that end of the road again. They would not let me off the road, but gave me this train on this end of the route—the 'Gold-Leaf Express.'

"No, I don't suppose I have quite got over the shock to my nerves, for frequently, when I go to bed more tired than usual, I wake with a start from a sort of far off dream of that eventful nightfall trip, the uncertain light, the still shimmering water and the white scared face of my fireman. My hair was as black as coal then; in three months it became as gray as you see it now.

"Yes'm, that's the northern train coming—oh, you're welcome, although, it's a story I'm not fond of telling—Good by."—*Christian Secretary.*

LEGEND OF ST. CHRISTOPHER.

THERE was once a mighty giant named Arprobus, a tall, broad-shouldered, powerful man. He wished to offer his services to some one worthy of employing a servant so capable and strong. He desired for his master one that had no superior, and feared no other person in the world. He heard of a very powerful king, and

at once traveled to his country, and stood in the hall of his palace, offering to him the great gifts of strength with which he had been endowed, and was accepted.

Arprobus served faithfully the king, until, one day, his Majesty falling sick, was in mortal terror at the thought of death. The powerful servant asked him why he feared, being so great a king as he was. The trembling king told his servant that he was afraid of the Devil, into whose hands he might fall if he died.

"Then there is one stronger than you," said Arprobus, looking in disappointment upon the shivering monarch.

"Oh! yes," said the king, "The Devil is stronger than I am."

"Then I will serve you no longer," said the giant, "for I only serve a prince who has no superior." After this, Arprobus entered into the service of the Devil. It was not long before, passing by a cross that had been erected by the way side, Arprobus noticed that the Devil shuddered as he looked upon it.

"Why do you tremble," asked he, "what is that?"

"It is the cross."

"To be sure! But why does that terrify you?"

"I fear Christ, who once hung upon it."

"Then he is mightier than you?"

"Yes; he is my foe!"

"Farewell, then; for I must find him. I only serve the master who has no superior."

Again the giant wandered forth, inquiring for Christ, whom even the Devil feared. An aged hermit told him that by doing Christ's work he would become his servant, and sometime meet the great master himself, and receive his welcome with approving words. So, wherever Arprobus heard of a laborer that needed aid, a sufferer that he could relieve, there he hurried, offering help, and constant-

ly calling upon the Master whom he had not seen, but already began to love, for a vision of his blessed face. But, though he labored long without seeing him, Arprobus never was happier. Under the blessing of those ready to perish, his heart swelled with exceeding joy, and his eyes melted with refreshing tears.

He raised his cabin by a stream, over which the pilgrims passed to the Holy land, and remained there assisting the faint and weary as they crossed it.

One night, when a dreadful storm was beating upon his roof, howling through the forest, tossing up the waters of the swift river into ridges of foam, he heard a child's voice upon the banks, calling in touching tones, "Oh! come, carry me over the river."

The giant, though weary with a hard day's work, rose at once, wondering that a child should be by the river-side at such an hour. He bowed his rugged shoulders, and placed the child carefully upon them. Now he entered the dark waters, and pressed on toward the further shore. But, what could it mean! Certainly, he had raised a child upon his arm; but a weight now pressed down upon him like a mountain. It bowed him to the waves. He struggled with all the force of his mighty strength and mightier will. In vain were his efforts. The sweat started from every pore. He was about to sink under his burden, and cried out in astonishment and fear, "Who art thou, wonderful child?"


In that moment the child that he bore seemed to grasp him in his arms, and at once placed him upon the river bank. The storm was over. A glorious vision stood before him. "I am Christ, whom thou hast faithfully served unseen. Inasmuch as you have done it unto these my servants, you have done it unto me!"

Down at his feet, humbled to the dust, Arprobus fell and worshiped.

"No longer," said the Master, "shalt thou be called Arprobus, but Christopheros (Christ-bearer); for thou hast borne the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

Ever after the happy servant, Christopher, sought to bear, for the Master's sake, whatever burden he pleased to place upon him.

LOVE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE.

" H, it's just as different as it can be," said one of my young friends.

"What is?" I asked.

"Why, being a Christian. Everything is so different from what I expected."

"What did you expect?"

"When you used to talk with me about being a Christian, I used to say to myself: 'No, I can't now, for I shall have to do so many hard things, and I never can do them!'"

"What hard things?"

"Oh I used to think—'Now if I become a Christian, I shall have to walk just so; shall have to go to Church and to prayer meeting; shall have to pray and read the Bible.' It is so different from what I thought!"

"Why James, what do you mean?" I exclaimed. "You do go to Church and to prayer meeting; you do read your Bible and pray; you do try to walk just right, do you not?"

"Oh, yes," answered James looking up with a bright smile; "but then I love to do them. That makes all the difference. I love Jesus, and I love to do as He wishes me to."

Yes, love does make all the difference. Love is the fulfilling of the law.—*Sunday-School Times.*

"IT'S ALL RIGHT!"



Minister had been holding a service one Sunday in the General Hospital just outside Murfreesborough. He wrote of it: "After service, one of the nurses asked me to go down to Ward E to see a sick man. I found him prostrate with fever, a tall athletic man, of middle age, evidently wholly unused to sickness. I said to him.

"I am sorry to see you in this trouble."

He interrupted me,—

"I'm sick, parson, but I'm not troubled; did the nurse tell you I was in trouble?"

His cheerful tone and sweet smile showed a Christian's voice; and I became interested to test his faith.

"You are very sick?"

"Yes, and a heap of men are dying in this hospital; but I'm not troubled; it's all right."

"You have a wife?"

"Yes, and six children."

"Do they at home know how you are?"

"No, sir," said he, for the first time showing emotion, "and I don't know how they are; but I ain't troubled about 'em. My wife gave me to God, and I gave her and the children to God; and then enlisted. I havn't heard from them since; that was eight months ago. But I'm not troubled about 'em. It's all right, parson—all right."

"Why did you send for me?" I asked.

"I wanted somebody to pray for me."

"What shall I pray for? You don't seem to want anything."

"Why, parson, can't a man pray without he's in trouble? My mind is mighty weak and scattered like,

and I wanted somebody to come and help me thank God. You can pray for anything else you reckon I want, but thank Him first."

I knelt on the ground by the cot, and with tears and with difficult utterance prayed with thanksgiving; the prostrate soldier occasionally breaking in,—

"Yes, Lord; yes, thank God."

THE AMBITIOUS YOUTH.

THE scene opens with a view of the great Natural Bridge in Virginia. There are two or three lads standing in the channel below, looking up with awe to that vast arch of unhewn rocks, which the Almighty bridged over those everlasting abutments, "when the morning stars sang together." The little piece of sky that is spanning these measureless piers is full of stars, though it is mid-day. As they look up those perpendicular bulwarks of limestone, to the key rock of that vast arch, it appears to them only of the size of a man's hand. The silence of death is rendered more impressive by the little stream that falls from rock to rock down the channel, where once the waters of a Niagara may have rushed in their fury.

The sun has darkened, and the boys have uncovered their heads instinctively, as if standing in the presence-chamber of the Majesty of the whole earth. At last this feeling of awe wears away; they begin to look around them; they find that others have been there and looked up with wonder to that everlasting arch.

They see the names of hundreds cut in the limestone abutments. A new feeling comes over their young hearts, and their jack-knives are in their hands in an instant. "What man has done, man can do," is their watchword, and fired

with this noble spirit, they draw themselves up and carve their names above those of a hundred tall, full-grown men, who have been there before them.

They are all satisfied with this exploit of physical exertion, except *one* whose example illustrates perfectly the forgotten truth that there is no royal road to intellectual eminence. This ambitious youth sees a name just above his reach—a name that will be green in the memory of the world when those of Alexander, Cæsar, and Bonaparte shall rot in oblivion. It was the name of Washington. Before he marched with Braddock to that fatal field, he had been there and left his name a foot above all his predecessors. It was a glorious thought of the boy to write his name side by side with that of the great “Father of his country.”

He grasps his knife with a firmer hand, and clinging to a little crag, he cuts a niche into the limestone about a foot above where he stands; he then reaches up and cuts another for his hands. 'Tis a dangerous venture, but as he puts his feet and hands into these niches, and draws himself up carefully to his full length, he finds himself, to his inexpressible exultation, a foot above every name that was ever chronicled in that mighty wall.

While his companions were regarding him with concern and admiration, he cuts his name in rude capitals, large and deep in that flinty album. His knife is still in his hand, and strength in his sinews, and a new-created aspiration in his heart. Again he cuts another niche, and again he carves his name in large capitals. This is not enough. Heedless of the entreaties of his companions, he cuts and climbs again. The graduations of his ascending scale grow wider apart. He measures his length at every gain, and marks his ascent with larger capitals, and stronger hieroglyphics. The voices of his friends wax weaker and weaker, and their words are finally lost on his ear.

He now, for the last time, casts a look beneath him. Had that glance lasted a moment, that moment would have been his last. He clings with a convulsive shudder to his little niche of rock. An awful abyss, such a precipice as Gloster's son depicted to his blind father, awaits his almost certain fall. He is faint from severe exertion, and trembling from the sudden view of the dreadful destruction to which he is exposed. His knife is worn halfway to the haft. He can hear the voices, but not the words of his terror-stricken companions below. What a moment? What a meagre chance to escape destruction. There is no retracing his steps. It is impossible to put his hands in the same niche with his feet, and retain his slender hold for a moment. His companions instantly perceive his new and fearful dilemma, and await his fall with emotions that freeze their young blood.

He is too high, too faint to ask for his father and mother, his brother and sister to come and witness or avert his destruction. But one of his companions anticipates his desire; he knows what yearnings come over the human heart when the King of Terrors shakes his sword at his victim at any time or place. Swift as the wind he bounds down the channel, and the situation of the fated boy is told upon his father's hearthstone.

Minutes of almost eternal length roll on, and then there are hundreds standing in the rocky channel and hundreds on the bridge above, all holding their breath, and awaiting the fearful catastrophe.

The poor boy hears the hum of new and numerous voices, both above and below. He can just distinguish the tones of his father, who is shouting with all the energy of despair, "William! William! don't look down. Your mother, and Henry, and Harriet are all here praying for you. Don't look down—keep your eye toward the top!"

The boy did not look down. His eye is fixed like a flint toward heaven, and his young heart on Him who reigns there. He grasps again his knife. He cuts another niche, and another foot is added to the hundreds that remove him from the reach of human help below. How carefully he uses his wasting blade! How anxiously he selects the softest places in that vast pier? How he avoids every flinty grain! How he economizes his physical powers, resting a moment at each gain he cuts.

How every motion is watched from below! There stand his father, mother, brother, and sister on the very spot where, if he falls, he will not fall alone.


The sun is now halfway down the West. The lad has made fifty additional niches in that mighty wall, and now finds himself directly under the middle of that vast arch of rocks and earth and trees.

He must now cut his way in a new direction to get from under the overhanging mountain. The inspiration of hope is flickering out in his bosom; its vital heat is fired by the increasing shouts of hundreds perched upon cliffs and trees, and others who stand with ropes in their hands on the bridge above, or with ladders below. Fifty gains more must be cut before the longest rope can reach him. His wasting blade strikes again into the limestone. A spyglass below watches and communicates to the multitude every mark of that faithful knife. The boy is emerging painfully, foot by foot, from under that lofty arch. Spliced ropes are ready in the hands of those who are leaning over the outer edge of the bridge. Two minutes more and all will be over. That blade is worn up to the last half-inch. The boy's head reels, his eyes are starting from their sockets; his last hope is dying in his breast; his life must hang upon the next gain he cuts.

At the last faint gash he makes, his knife, his faithful knife, drops from his little nerveless hands, and ringing along down the precipice, falls at his mother's feet. An involuntary groan of despair runs, like a death-knell, through the channel below, and then all is still as the grave. At the height of nearly three hundred feet the devoted boy lifts his hopeless heart, and closing his eyes, commends his soul to God.

While he thus stands for a moment reeling, trembling, toppling over into eternity, a shout from above falls on his ear. The man who is lying with half his body projecting over the bridge, has caught a glimpse of the boy's shoulders, and a smothered exclamation of joy bursts from his lips. Quick as thought the noosed rope is within reach of the sinking youth. No one breathes; half-unclosing his eyes, and with a faint, convulsive effort, the boy drops his arms through the noose. Darkness comes over him, and with the words "God" and "Mother" on his lips, just loud enough to be heard in heaven, the tightening rope lifts him out of the last shallow niche. The hands of a hundred men, women, and children are pulling at that rope, and the unconscious boy is suspended and swaying over an abyss, which is the closest representative of eternity that has yet been found in height or depth.

Not a lip moves while he is dangling there; but when a sturdy Virginian draws up the lad, and holds him up in his arms in view of the trembling multitude below, such shouting, such leaping for joy, such tears of gratitude, such notes of gladness as went up those unfathomable barriers, and were reiterated and prolonged by the multitude above, were alone akin to those which angels make when a straying soul comes home to God.



THE DERWESH AND THE CAVILLER.



man came one day to a derwesh and laid before him three questions :

“ 1. Why is it that God is everywhere present? I do not see him. Show me where he is.

“ 2. Why is man to be punished for his sins? He has no free will since he can do nothing against the will of God.

“ 3. How can God punish Satan with the fire of hell, since he is formed of fire—a flaming spirit? Fire cannot do harm to fire.”

Hereupon the derwesh picked up a large lump of earth, and threw it with all his might at the head of the questioner. The poor man was startled at this striking answer, and lodged a complaint before the Cadi. The Cadi summoned the derwesh and asked him :

“ Why did you throw a lump of earth at the man’s head, instead of giving an answer to his questions ? ”

“ It was my answer,” replied the derwesh, “ and the best answer I could give at once to all three questions.

“ 1. The man says he has a pain in his head. I don’t see it. Let him make me see the pain in his head; then I may try to make him see God.

“ 2. Then he comes to you and lodges a complaint of me. What right has he to do so? I have no free will; and he has no right to seek that I be punished, since God permitted me to throw the earth at him.

“ 3. And then how can earth do harm to earth? The man is made of earth,—earth cannot do harm to earth, if fire cannot do harm to fire.”

The questioner never forgot this lesson.

THE HEART'S DESIRE.

"I'M determined to have what I want, at any cost," declared Mrs. Roxbury, sullenly, "I believe that I will have it, too."

"Surely," replied grandma from her arm-chair in the sunny window, "people usually do have what they seek above all things. It is startling to me, as I look back over my long life, and remember the experiences of my friends, to note this fact; they have all had their heart's desire! I more and more assuredly believe, that even in this world that we call so full of disappointment, that we do have the thing that we set our hearts upon. So, my dear, I shall be surprised if you are an exception."

"Can you say that you have found what you wanted most?" inquired the younger lady in an interested tone.

"Yes," was the sweet, calm reply, "the thing that I have sought that I have found, according to the sure promise."

"It is very encouraging," said Mrs. Roxbury, brightly.

"So it is! You will travel around the world some time, as you have always planned to do, I have little doubt. It is very interesting for me to study what people are setting their hearts upon, to trace their workings, and to trace God's workings. We can all have our plan or his, just as we choose. The only things that we need fight against are His merciful hindrances."

"Persevering people always find obstacles," said Mrs. Roxbury, flushing uncomfortably.

Grandma went on in her low monotone. "I once knew a lady, handsome and bright, who cared for nothing but dress, she cared more to be elegantly dressed than she did for anything else in heaven or on earth. And when she was dressed, she was a picture. Her little daughter, fresh

from that great school at Bethlehem, begged permission to go to church one Sabbath afternoon, saying that she always went to church at Bethlehem. 'No, indeed,' said her mother sharply, 'you would be a pretty sight when you came out. How all those flounces would look after you had sat on them an hour or two. Take a walk, if you must go out. This mother died not long afterwards—she was unconscious for days, never dropping one word that her friends care to remember. Then her husband spent his evenings at home, for the first time for years and years, and the little girl looked forward to wearing her mother's diamonds. But—she had her heart's desire. She was elegant even in her coffin.'

Mrs. Roxbury fidgetted over her crocheting.

"And I knew a Mrs. Bacon once; she was a housekeeper, that was all she lived for. What a kitchen she had, so shiny and sweet! The kinds of cake that she could make, and the number of bottles of canned fruit in her store-closet, why it would take quite a knowledge of arithmetic to count them. She never left home, how could she? A match might be wasted, or the wrong bottle opened. She had a young brother, a poor fellow of a warm heart, but a weak intellect, who lived with a married brother a mile out of the village; he fell sick, and lingered all through one summer; he sat day after day alone, and slept night after night with no one near enough to hear if he asked for a drink of water. But she kept her boarders, canned her fruit, and kept her kitchen shiny and sweet. She did call to see him two or three times for a few minutes when she went to market, I believe. But he did not ask for her after awhile. She did go to sit up with him two nights before he died. 'So you've come at last,' he said. But I never saw such a kitchen, and one year she had one hundred and fifty cans of blackberries.

"And you remember Harvy Weeks? A more ambitious student never went to college. How proud his father was of him. He coughed and studied, and studied and coughed, but they were all determined that he should graduate first in his class of eighty. And he did. Three days afterward his old father took his dead body home. There was no failure; Harvy had reached his standard. Oh, these heart's desires, how we do strive till we get them! Never tell me that people can't get the thing they want most; if it is in the world they get it.

"Don't you know Bert Heyward, how he broke his heart night and day after Louise Vernon, and how he would not take a refusal? The night before they were married her father told him that he would regret it all his life. And what a wreck his life is. He has a wife whose tongue is 'set on fire of hell.' He would have said that God was cruel, if he had failed, and taken to drink, perhaps, just as he has now in his success. Yes, my dear, all that we have to do is to try hard enough, fight against God's will long enough, and we shall have the thing we like best."

"Grandma, it's horrid and hateful in you to remind me of such things, just because I said that I would give Phil no rest until he promised to take me to Europe. Don't you know something pleasant? You can't keep me from teasing him by all your dismal stories."

"Perhaps not; but your husband's reluctance may be one of God's hindrances. I was reading about Zimri awhile ago, and he reminded me to look back over these things."

"Zimri! I never heard of him."

"He was only another who had his heart's desire by making everything give way to it. He wanted to live in a palace and be king. He reigned seven days in Tirzah. And then when the city was taken, he went into his

heart's desire, and burned it with fire; and so they were burned, both together.

"Then I fell to thinking how people do get what they give up everything for, and then I fell into thanksgiving because I had had my heart's desire. You know that there's a promise about that: 'Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desire of thine heart.' Don't you think that 'He shall give thee' is a better way than to determine to have? We shall have no need to burn over our heads the palace that he gives to us."

"But, grandma, think how many things you have wished and worked and prayed for that you have all your life gone without."

"True; but I haven't wanted them most of all?"

"What have you wanted most of all?" asked Mrs. Roxbury, impatiently. "A long widowhood, loss of children, and a feeble old age?"

The old lady answered meekly: "I have wanted, most of all, and prayed most of all, that God's will might be done in me, and to-day I thank Him for giving to me my heart's strongest desire."

"Must—I—desire—that—so?" inquired Mrs. Roxbury, slowly; she looked awed, almost frightened.

"You must love God's will more for what it is, that is, because it is His will, than you love the things through which He reveals it."

"I can't," was the sullen reply. "I love what He gives me because it is good and I want it; I never thought to love anything because He loved to give it to me."

"Then you cannot pray the prayer that I have prayed for forty years: 'Give me not my heart's desire until I delight in Thee.'"

"No, I can't."

Grandma sighed, leaning back in her chair for her afternoon nap; her rebellious listener dropped some bitter tears over her work, thinking that grandma's prayer was too hard for her.

Is it too hard for you, too?—*By* JENNIE M. DRINKWATER,
in the Advocate and Guardian.



SUGGESTIVE ILLUSTRATION.

PRAYER was never meant to be a substitute for labor—an easy way of throwing our responsibilities upon God. The old classic story of the teamster whose cart stuck in the mud, and who fell to crying to Hercules for help instead of using effort himself, and was told by the god he invoked to put his own shoulder to the wheel, shows that even a heathen mind could see that faith was never meant to exclude works. That is a good anecdote which they tell about Mr. Moody—and an authentic one, too—in his earlier days in Chicago, when the noon-day prayer-meeting had been established, and he was a regular attendant. Brother K., a man of wealth, rose one day, and told the meeting of an opportunity which there was to do a certain good thing, if only three or four hundred dollars could be raised for the purpose, and he urged those present to pray earnestly that it might be done. Mr. Moody was on his feet, with a sudden inspiration, saying, “Brother K., I wouldn’t trouble the Lord with a little thing like that; I would do it myself.” The universal smile proved that every one took the point of his joke.—*Congregationalist.*

SUGGESTIVE TO FAULT-FINDERS.

“**N**OW, deacon I’ve just one word to say. I can’t bear your preaching! I get no good. There’s so much in it that I don’t want that I grow lean on it. I lose my time and pains.”

“Mr. Bunnel, come in here. There’s my cow Thankful—she can teach you theology!”

“A cow teach theology! What do you mean?”

“Now see! I have just thrown her a forkful of hay. Just watch her. There now! She has found a stick—you know sticks will get into the hay—and see how she tosses it one side, and leaves it, and goes on to eat what is good. There again! She has found a burdock, and she throws it one side and goes on eating. And there! She does not relish that bunch of daisies, and she leaves them, and—goes on eating. Before morning she will clear the manger of all, save a few sticks and weeds, and she will give milk. There’s milk in that hay, and she knows how to get it out, albeit there may be now and then a stick or a weed which she leaves. But if she refused to eat, and spent the time in scolding about the fodder, she, too, would ‘grow lean’ and my milk would be dried up. Just so with our preaching. Let the old cow teach you. Get all the good you can out of it, and leave the rest. You will find a great deal of nourishment in it.”

Mr. Bunnel stood silent a moment, and then turned away, saying: “Neighbor, that old cow is no fool, at any rate.”—*Dr. Dodd.*

HOW THE MINISTER WAS CURED. "

DR. Neale, of Boston, tells this anecdote of Dr. Stillman, his distinguished predecessor, of revolutionary times : One Sunday morning he preached, as he thought, a poor sermon. It is very likely that it was so, for ministers sometimes do such things, but they have different ways of meeting the humiliation. Some put on a bold face and pretend to care nothing about it ; some look dignified as if they had said something solemn and deep ; others comfort themselves with the thought that they will do better next time, but Dr. Stillman was so mortified that he could not eat his dinner, and was sick in bed. "Jephthah," he faintly said, "I shall not be able to preach this afternoon. You must see the deacons and ask them to get some other minister to supply my pulpit—Mr. Chauncey, Mr. Kirkland, or Mr. Eckley." Jephthah who understood the case perfectly, said, very respectfully, he would go. "Dr. Stillman ought to have a rest, dear man, but I feel bad for the people ; they will be disappointed, but folks is queer, they doesn't want to hear anybody else. I heard Mr. Smith say this morning what a beautiful sermon the doctor preached. But I'll tell the deacons Massa Stillman is wearin' hisself out."

"You needn't go," said the doctor, brightening up. "I feel better. Brush my boots, Jephthah, and I'll try to preach myself." He went into the pulpit and never preached more powerfully and eloquently than he did that afternoon.

Life affords but few opportunities of doing great services for others ; but there is scarcely an hour of the day that does not furnish occasions for a kind word or deed, or for performing some little act of kindness that will add to the happiness of those about us.—*Bowes*.

"LITTLE PIETY."

THE boys all said that "Little Ned" was the queerest fellow in the regiment. He never said much, but he would look unutterable things out of his eyes. They were a deep blue; a sort of pure blue, that looked perfectly clear and good.

One day, one of our men was swearing furiously, when Ned came and put his hand on the man's arm, and said, "Please don't speak so," he was looking right into the savage man's eyes. I looked to see him knock Ned down, for he was the worst-tempered man I ever knew. But he looked at little Ned, and said, "Beg yer pardin, Little Piety, didn't mean t' swar."

So I asked an orderly why they called Ned "Little Piety," and he said, "It's 'cause he's so pious, sir. He prays and sings, kind o' low like, in his tent; and says grace at mess, all to himself; and don't never do nothin' wrong. We used to kind o' run on him at first, and that's the way the 'Little Piety' got hitched on to him; but the boys mean it all well enough now. There ain't no man that'll dare to bother him, 'thout they are ready to fight Piety's whole company, cap'n and all."

I called Ned up, and asked him where he learned to live such a life as he did. He told me of his Sunday School in Indiana, and of his teacher's prayers. I looked earnestly at the boy, to see what kind of stuff he was made of. He was a withy little fellow, of some seventeen years old, and with just the eye of a soldier.

One day some of the boys asked if they might have a hospital tent that was not in use for a Sunday School.

"Why," said I, "is the chaplain going to open a Sunday School in camp?"

"No," said they, "it's Little Piety."

"Will the boys go?" I asked.

"Yes, indeed, sir," they said; "Little Piety is up to it, you see. He's got the real pious, that shows out good every day."

So I gave them the use of the tent, and it would have done any man's heart good to see how he carried on his school. Some twenty of the boys went, and others were around outside; but nobody made fun.

The boy had a wonderful influence in the regiment. When any duty was to be done, he was on hand; brave, cool, a fearless rider, and with a good wrist for a bridle rein or for sabre. His sabre and carbine were always bright, and his horse seemed in good condition when the others were looking the worse for hard usage and poor forage. Inspecting officers often asked about him.

One day as I galloped down the line, before we went into fight, I saw Ned sitting on his horse—his horse was small—in the front rank. I said, "Ned, you'd better go back? you are too small for to-day. You may get rode down. It will be all right for you. Go back to the rear."

But he begged to stay. "Please don't send me back. I can handle my sabre as well as any of them;" and drawing it he made a neat *moulinet* to show how strong and supple his wrist was.

The men, too, begged that he might stay, and promised to see that he wasn't run down. So I let him stay. But I felt badly about it, for he was so valuable a soldier in his influence on the men. Still I could not order him back to the rear when he wanted to do his duty and distinguish himself.

Then came the sweeping charge of the cavalry across the road and into the field beyond. The bullets whistled and "zipped" by our ears. The air was filled with dust and

smoke; and now and then would wake up again the wild yell of our troops.

The enemy broke for the woods, and we chased them some way, shutting the captured ones behind us, to be hustled back to the rear.

While the howitzers were shelling the woods, and the men were resting for a time, I rode slowly back over the field to see about the noble fellows who had fallen. Some were wounded, and some dear faces that I had learned to love as comrades were turned up, sharp and still, towards the heavens, in the dying light of early evening.

Just where we had crossed the road, and where quite a number were lying, was one poor boy, flat on his face. He was smaller than the rest, and it seemed as though my heart had stopped beating when I got off my horse to turn him over.

It was little Ned with a hole in his forehead, where the cruel bullet had gone crushing through his brain.

The whole command turned out to follow the dead body of that blue-eyed comrade to the grave; and strong men cried that day, men whose hearts had not quailed under a heavy battery fire.

Little Ned was courageous—a hero—on the field; but he was more of a hero in the every day camp-life. Every man was brave before the enemy's guns; it was harder to be brave under a comrade's sneer. Why the boys respected and loved him so much was because he was the bravest of all under fire and sneer.—*The Little Corporal.*



JOE BLACK

THE first time I ever saw Joe Black he was out on the sidewalk in front of the house where he lived.

It was a sharp winter morning. He had a coat on, but no hat. A boy who goes out of a winter morning without any hat on will be almost sure to catch cold, get a sore throat, and perhaps have the croup and be very sick indeed.

There were a number of boys out on the sidewalk too, and Joe was looking on to see them play, rather than playing with them. Some of them were sliding along on the ice in the gutter, others were snowballing, and all seemed to be having a fine time.

Pretty soon a man came along. Joe was busy watching the boys, and did not see or hear the man until he was close upon him. The man had a heavy bundle upon his shoulder, and called out rather angrily to Joe: "Get out of the way."

Joe was not a little frightened at the harsh tone in which the man spoke to him, and got out of the way as quickly as he could.

Some boys would have answered this rude man rudely back, and perhaps told him to get out of the way himself; but Joe took the roughness very meekly.

The next morning Joe was out again; only this time he had not got as far as the sidewalk, but was standing on the doorsteps, looking up and down the street and wondering what he should do. While he was so standing and wondering, the same man came along who had spoken to him so unkindly the day before. He had what looked like the same bundle on his shoulder. The man did not see Joe, but Joe saw him and recognized him. But he kept perfectly still and watched him go by.

Presently the man, as he walked along, put his hand in his side-pocket and pulled out his handkerchief. In so doing, he pulled out one of his mittens too. It fell unseen by its owner upon the sidewalk. When he put his handkerchief back in his pocket he did not miss the mitten. There it lay just where it fell, the man walking faster and faster away.

Some boys in Joe's place would have been glad that such a cross man had lost his mitten and would hope that he might never find it.

Not so Joe Black. He saw what had happened—the handkerchief taken out, the mitten fallen and left lying on the walk, the man unconscious even that he had dropped it. It took him but a moment to decide that he ought to go and restore the mitten to its owner. I don't know that he so much as thought of the cross way the man had spoken to him the day before. If he did, he did not cherish any resentment. So off he started, down the steps and along the walk, until he came to the mitten. Picking it up, he ran on after the man as fast as his legs could carry him. Instead of calling out to him, he waited until he got close behind him, and then gently touched his hand.

The man turned round to see who touched him.

There stood Joe, holding up the mitten.

"Well done!" said the man, recognizing the mitten and feeling in his pocket at the same moment. "Well done! Where did you find that?" And he took the mitten and put it back in his pocket.

Joe only wagged his tail; for he was nothing but a great Newfoundland dog, Joe Black, and he couldn't speak a word. But I have sometimes thought that he was more of a gentleman than the man who dropped his mitten. At any rate, he knew how to return good for evil. Do you?

DEACON BARNES' SUNDAY.

"**B**EAUTIFUL, beautiful!" mentally ejaculated Deacon Barnes at the close of a sermon about heaven. "Those are my ideas exactly."

And so enrapt was he with his thoughts, as he passed out of church, he forgot to ask lame old Mrs. Howe to ride home with him, as was his usual custom.

"Perhaps it is just as well," he thought, "for she is a worldly old woman, and would probably have drawn my thoughts away from heaven."

At the dinner-table his son exclaimed "O, father, I have a situation at last."

"Have you forgotten that it is Sunday, John?" asked his father, sternly. "Don't let me hear any any more such talk."

John ate his dinner in silence. How could his situation be a wrong thing to speak of on Sunday! He was so thankful for it that it seemed to come from the hand of God. God knew all about the restless months in which he had answered an advertisement a day. *

When the minister gave thanks in church for all the mercies of the past week, John's heart gave a grateful throb, and he determined anew to acknowledge God in all his ways.

John ate his dinner in silence while his father thought about heaven.

In the afternoon Mr. Barnes' nephew, a stranger in the place, came over from his boarding place opposite and sat on the piazza talking with John.

"I can't allow this, Tom," said Mr. Barnes, coming to the door with the Bible in his hands, "you must not sit

here breaking the Sabbath. Go back to your boarding-house and read some good book."

Tom started up angrily, and spent the afternoon fishing and bathing with an old colored man, his only other acquaintance in the place, while Deacon Barnes sat in a large rocker on the piazza with a handkerchief over his face and thought about heaven.

Presently his two little grand-daughters came out on the piazza with a large picture book and sat down near him. There was a flutter of leaves and a great deal of buzzing as the little yellow heads bent over the book, and finally they laughed outright.

"Children, where's your mother?" sternly demanded Deacon Barnes, springing to his feet

"Up stairs, putting baby to sleep," they answered both together.


Deacon Barnes strode into the hall.

"Ellen! Ellen!" he shouted, "I should think you might keep these children quiet on the Sabbath. They won't allow me to think."


Ellen had been awake all night with a fretful baby. She had hushed him, and had just fallen asleep when her father's voice aroused her and awoke the baby.

"Please send them up stairs," she said wearily.

And all the sultry afternoon she amused the three children in a close upper room, while her father rocked and fanned himself, and thought about heaven.—*By E. A. D., in the Advocate and Guardian.*



FOLDED HANDS.

N Nuremberg, about the year 1486, lived two boys, Albrecht Dürer and Franz Knigstein. Both were near of an age, and both were about to enter the studio of Michael Wohlgemuth, a famous artist of that day. But, with a difference: Jacob Knigstein, worthy builder and craftsman that he was, had one supreme longing, namely, to see his son an artist, so Franz's hands were made strong by home-love and sympathy, while Albrecht had won but a grudging consent from the old goldsmith father, who would fain have seen his craft handed down as an heirloom, from generation to generation. However, consent had been given. As for sympathy, one could work without it, as Dürer found in later years, at even greater cost, when he married Hans Fritz's daughter.

The boys were Michael Wohlgemuth's steady, patient students through the appointed years of service; but the wandering years that Albrecht gave to Germany, Franz decided to pass in sunny Italy. Their master gave an expressive shrug as Franz left him after good-by words. "Franz is a good lad, Dürer," he said, to the old goldsmith. "But a painter—never! Albrecht, now—that is another matter."

The goldsmith granted, not yet fully reconciled to his son's choice; but pleased at Wohlgemuth's rare praise.

"Albrecht does well enough; but has not Franz the prize for perspective, even now?"

"Yes," said the old painter, smiling. "By Albrecht's grace, albeit Franz knows it not. Albrecht did not choose to take it from him; that is all. If Franz sketches a cat, he must needs dissect it first, to be sure about the muscles;

then he looks after each particular hair in Puss's tail; and yet, it is but a dead cat, after all. Whereas, five strokes from Albrecht make Kätchen herself, back up, ready to spring! And poor Franz keeps laboring on with might and main, over what the other does with a turn of his little finger! And yet, with the good father, who thinks the sun rises over Franz's right shoulder and sets over the left, and that pretty Gretchen, for whom he has set the world on fire already, and his own earnest belief in his vocation, the lad *must* some day do something."

"Well, I never was a painter, and do not understand their notions," placidly returned the goldsmith, as he quitted Wohlgemuth.

Nuremberg heard from time to time of the art-students' journeyings. When the three years were ended, Franz came back to his proud father and the sweetheart who had patiently bided her time of waiting, and they were wedded.

As for Albrecht, you know how his travels ended, he came home, married a shrew, and lived, labored, and died in Nuremberg. Perhaps the man's suffering was the artist's gain; and if Hans Fritz's daughter cared nothing for that noble heart, it was all the freer for Art's unchallenged holding. But the contrast between the two friends' handiwork grew more marked as time went on. No matter how strange or far-fetched any fancy of Dürer's, some heart rang to its touch; no matter how careful, how elaborate—aye, how loftily and deeply spiritual Franz's picture, it hung unsought and unregarded in his studio, till the disgusted artist put it out of sight. Gretchen still believed in her husband. Old Knigstein was dead, and Franz had not now full leisure to give to painting; for, finding his art unprofitable, so far as money was concerned, he had taken up his father's old trade of house-building.

Here the Nurembergers sang his praises, nothing loth, and work poured in upon him, for the new houses were better than old Knigstein's; but no matter what the pressure, Franz still held firmly to his rule—so many days in the week a builder, so many days an artist.

In one of the many talks between the two friends, they found that both had been planning a series of etchings on the same subject—the Passion of our Lord. It was Franz who proposed that neither should hear the other's conception nor see his fellow's work in progress, until both had done, then they would compare results. And to the sincere, simple-hearted men, it was only natural to kneel and ask a blessing on the work of their hands before they parted.

I cannot tell you how much time the etchings took, but it was long enough to make Franz's face sharpen in a way that made his serener comrade think of Dante, whose cheeks the great poem made lean through so many years. To Albrecht, the work ever brought peace and calm; it was well for him that it did!

At last both had finished, and Albrecht brought his work to Franz's room. In silence they laid out corresponding sketches, one by one, then stood regarding the well-covered table. Truly, the great subject had but shown Franz's lack of fitness for it. His etchings showed, beside Dürer's, like a set of mocking, godless caricatures, and with one move of his arm he swept them to the floor.

"Lie there," he said, bitterly. "Dost think that I would dishonor my God by such as ye are?"

He sat down, with his face between his hands. Ah, children, failures are hard at fifteen, but they are crushing at forty-five! Dürer sat watching him, in great distress, yet not daring to say a word of comfort. How could he, when the only comfort worth having was praise of the work so rightly condemned?

There was a long silence, with one or two tearless, heart-wringing sobs to break it; then Franz said, "Tomorrow, Albrecht, you shall know all my heart; but now—"

"You are best alone," returned his friend, gathering up his own studies, and heartily glad to be gone.

True to his word, Franz came in the morning. He looked like one worn by a long vigil, but yet his face had a serene, steadfast look that surprised Albrecht, who had rather dreaded to see him.

"Let me see your etchings again," Franz asked, after the morning greetings.

Albrecht silently laid them before him. He looked at them one by one; then he said:

"The good Lord bless them to others as He has to me; I can give them no better God speed, Albrecht. For they have shown me how utterly useless my strivings have been; how truly my work has been dead work. I may be fit to build houses for our good Nuremberg folk, but I must let Art be."

He got up, and stood looking out of the window for a moment, then came back to the table where Dürer sat, still speechless, and nervously working with his pencil.

"Here," said Franz, folding his hands, "I give it all up. The good Lord gave me not an artist's hands, so He never meant them to do artist's work; but may He bless, day by day, the homely labor He has given me to do!"

He stood, leaning against the table. As Albrecht dared at last to look up into his friend's face—the folded hands caught his eye.

"Franz, be quiet one moment!" he exclaimed, "Don't stir!"

Weary with his long struggle, Franz cared not to ask the why or the wherefore of his friend's abrupt command, but stood passive until he was released.

"That will do now," said Dürer. "Franz, old comrade. I can say nothing, but that you are nobly right."

A few days later, Franz was again with Albrecht, and a sketch of two folded hands was the latest addition to the treasures of the studio.

"Dost know them?" asked the artist.

Franz looked closer.

"I should; they are my very own. Was that what thou wast doing the other morning?"

Albrecht nodded.

"I have great faith in those hands. But the spirit that is in them is thine, not mine; I did but set it forth. Thou shalt see whether they go not to men's hearts!"

Franz shook his head in doubt.

"Were not the sketch the better for an inscription? say, a scroll coming from between the hands, '*Fiat voluntas tua*'?"

The artist smiled his own sweet, far-sighted smile.

"Nay, Franz," he said. "Where the spirit of Holy Writ is so plain, there needs not the graven letter. I may err; but I think, in resigning art, thou has done at last true artist's work!"

It proved so, indeed; for Dürer made many copies of the sketch before men ceased to call for them. How much comfort Franz Knigstein, master-builder in Nuremberg, had from that picture, the chronicles of the quaint old city do not tell; but the tradition is, that wherever Franz Knigstein's Folded Hands go, they bring a blessing with them; for the artist's skill has stayed the spirit of the living creature that was in them—of humble owning that work is to be done where and when and as God pleases; and where that spirit is, the work of the hands cannot but prosper, whether, to our eyes, it fail or it succeed.—*St. Nicholas.*

• FINDING A GIRL IN THE BIBLE.



N English town missionary a short time ago related a remarkable incident. There was a lodging house in his district, which he had long desired to enter, but was deterred from so doing by his friend, who feared that his life would be thereby endangered. He became at length so uneasy that he determined to risk all consequences and try to gain admission. So one day he gave a somewhat timid knock at the door, in response to which a coarse voice roared out, "Who's there?" and at the same moment a vicious-looking woman opened the door, and ordered the man to go away. "Let him come in, and see who he is, and what he wants," growls out the same voice. The missionary walked in, and, bowing politely to the rough-looking man whom he had just heard speak, said, "I have been visiting most of the houses in this neighborhood, to read with and talk to the people about good things. I have passed your door as long as I feel I ought, for I wish also to talk with you and your lodgers." "Are you what is called a town missionary?" "I am, sir," was the reply. "Well, then," said the fierce-looking man, "sit down and hear what I am going to say. I will ask you a question out of the Bible. If you answer me right, you may call at this house, and read and pray with us or our lodgers as often as you like; if you do not answer me right, we will tear the clothes off your back, and tumble you neck and heels into the street. Now what do you say to that, for I am a man of my word." The missionary was perplexed, but at length quietly said: "I will take you." "Well, then," said the man, "here goes. Is the word girl in any part of the Bible? if so, where is it to be found, and how often! That is my question."

"Well, sir; the word girl is in the Bible, but only once, and may be found in the words of the Prophet Joel, iii. 3. The words are, 'And sold a girl for wine, that they might drink.'"

"Well," replied the man. "I am dead beat; I durst have bet five pounds you could not have told."

"And I could not have told yesterday," said the visitor. "For several days I have been praying that the Lord would open me a way into this house, and this very morning, when reading the Scriptures in my family, I was surprised to find the word girl, and got the Concordance to see if it occurred again, and found it did not. And now, sir, I believe that God did know, and does know, what will come to pass, and surely his hand is in this for my protection and your good."

The whole of the inmates were greatly surprised, and the incident has been overruled to the conversion of the man, his wife, and two of the lodgers.

MOTHER'S WAY.

FRED White sat on the edge of the sidewalk, slowly replacing his shoes and stockings. The shoes were heavy with red clay and the stockings clung with damp tenacity to a pair of blue feet, refusing to be tugged beyond the wet little heels of their owner.

"I say, Rob."

"Well," inquired Rob, meditatively, tracing with one bare toe the hop scotch pattern on the sidewalk. "Well?"

"You and the rest of the boys go 'long and get your 'scuses. Don't wait for me," tugging at the refractory sock. "Teacher'll expect us back right away"—tug, tug,

and a sound of parting stitches in the stocking. "Meet me at the corner, and we'll all go into school together. There!"

Seeing that Fred's prospects were brightening, Rob and the others ran down the street, intent on producing from maternal pens the required excuses for an unfortunate tardiness in the school-room.

"How they do sing!" soliloquized Fred, as the voices of his schoolmates fell upon his ears through the open windows. "They ain't late, nor going home for a note, nor anything. Bother the raft and the poles and the mud!" and the little boy ruefully wiped his cheek with his clean jacket-sleeve and proceeded to tie a knot in the stiff, clay-colored shoe-string.

"I will be good, I will be good,
I will be good to-day!"

shouted the chorus in the school-room as Fred arose and, started for his home around the next corner.

"I will be good, I *will* be good!"

proceeded the songsters, with the usual vehemence of threescore mischievous and thoughtless urchins; but the words struck the listener unpleasantly. •

"Just what I said to mamma this morning, when she pinned my collar," said he, feeling involuntarily for the too frequently lost article. "I meant it, too. But Rob and the boys called me to the water, and then Tom Gray said I didn't dare go on the raft; and, any way, I won't be dared by Tom." •

Fred sighed as he opened the little gate and went through the grass to the kitchen door. The hardest of his way lay in meeting this mamma and conquering her scruples—for mamma had her scruples, and they interfered sadly sometimes with Fred's plans. She was washing though, and perhaps would be in a hurry. That was in his favor.

"I say, mamma," winningly.

"Why! Freddie," came in sweet, surprised tones from the cloud of steam.

"Say, now—now, mamma," laying a stick of wood with great precision on the nearest pile.

"What is it, dear? Why aren't you at school? It is late."

"Well, that's just it. You see Rob and the boys and—well yes—and, and me—"

"Come here, Freddy. Let me wipe your face and your collar. How came you to take hold of it with muddy fingers? Come into the house."

"Oh! never mind. I'm in a hurry," said Fred thrusting his feet behind the chips, "and teacher wants a note. Please do it quick, 'cause I've got to be back in time for 'rithmetic. I'll be bringing in wood while you write."

Now, this unusual offer of Fred's struck his mother suspiciously, and she dried her hands slowly, with a troubled look on her face. It was a way his mother had. She always looked seriously upon the misdemeanors of her children in their dealings with their teachers. Fred never liked it. It made him so much trouble to have her ask questions. Why didn't she let things go, as Tom Gray's mother did?

"Freddy."

"Yes'm," hesitatingly, from the dim recesses of the woodshed, where the dry sticks lay.

"Come in for a moment."

Fred obeyed. She was a little mother, but he always obeyed when she spoke. She led him into the coal-room, beyond the kitchen.

"Yes, sir," said Fred to himself, "Yes, sir, she's going to ask questions. The boys 'll be waiting. Oh! dear. That old raft and Tom Gray!—and, any way, what did make mamma so inquisitive?"

"Where have you been?" began his mother, sitting down in the green arm-chair (she looked pale against the green, Fred thought) and removing the strip of linen from the neck of his "roundabout."

"Just down to the ravine a little while. There were whole lots of boys 'nd a raft. They said I daren't get aboard; 'nd so I did. You wouldn't have me be a coward, of course," doubtfully but encouragingly.

Mamma didn't seem very appreciative just here, so Fred proceeded:

"'Nd then we went to the bridge, and the bell rung before we could get ashore. Rob and the others were late too."

As his mother's eyes were slightly downcast, Fred stood a little closer to her skirts. His feet seemed in the way.

"What did your teacher say?" asked Mrs. White—so sadly, it seemed—taking from Fred's pocket a roll of soiled linen, once a clean handkerchief.

"Oh! she said, we must get our 'scuses—the rule, you know. Oh, no! My feet are warm enough. Don't mind me! You just be writen, 'cause I'm in such a hurry."

Quietly surveying the clay-spread shoes, Mrs. White began removing them. Fred thought her hands looked very white and delicate against his soiled stockings, and wondered, as she laid the damp articles aside, if washing was very hard; any way, mamma's arms were slender, too. 'Twas too bad to make her so much work. "But the note!

"Come mamma—will you?"

"Yes, Freddy, since your teacher requires it. Put on these dry things." And she turned away to bring her pen.

"Why, ain't she jolly though?" whispered Fred, to his dry socks. "No questions, nor grieved looks. Tell you, I'll never do this again. No sir!"

"What shall I say?" asked mamma, as she pushed down the clothes in the boiler and returned.

"Oh! just what they always say. Please a-scuse Freddy, as he was necessarily 'tained," said the young diplomat.

"Then it was necessary for you to go to the water?" queried his mother doubtfully.

Freddy was chipping the dry mud from his copper toes. He didn't reply.

"And necessary to play on the raft?"

"Tom Gray dared me," interposed Fred, dulling his knife rather recklessly.

"And necessary to stand in the cold water?"

"Well, now, mamma, let's not talk about that now. It's most ten o'clock. Please be writin'."

"What shall I write?"

"Oh! you know." And the speaker nervously twisted his shoe-string and put it through an eyelet.

Mamma began writing gravely. Fred hopped on one foot to the table, anxiously spelling out the words. He saw:

"N-o, no; e-x-c-u-s-e, excuse."

Down went the undressed foot. Matters were growing serious.

"H-i-s, his; o-w-n, own; f-a-u-l-t, fault."

"Oh, mamma! She'll punish me, she'll punish me! How *can* you. Oh! don't you love me? Oh! mamma!"

"Yes, dear, I love you. Isn't my note true?"

"Well, but couldn't you just say—just say—well, couldn't you just say—well couldn't you fix it somehow?" he sobbed.

"This is the truth, dear, and the truth cannot be improved by fixing. Mamma can't tell a lie for you."

"I don't want you to tell a lie." Oh! no; the dear face of his mother was too pure for that. Fred only wanted a compromise.

"But don't you love me? Do you want me to be punished?"

"I love you too well to send you to your teacher with a falsehood in your hand. I cannot fix the note, Freddy, without making it untrue; but I would gladly bear the pain of your punishment on my own hand."

"Never!" exclaimed Fred, with unwonted chivalry, kissing the hands that were finishing his toilet.

"I will walk back with you, dear," putting the neat Shaker bonnet over her strangely dewy eyes? "and you will not be as lonely then."

"But you'll hear her whip me. She will certainly do that if I take this note," and the sobs began again.

"Then I shall know you are bearing the pain, rather than carrying an untruth from your mother's hand," said Mrs. White, taking Fred's in her own and moving to the door.

Going toward the school-room, a strange medley of thoughts passed through the little boy's mind. Mother's way was so strange, so irresistible. It made trouble for him; yet it was right, he knew. But that terrible ruler! His hand would tremble; but his mother bade him good-bye at the gate, as though punishment was nothing.

"Go in now, Freddy. Mamma can wait for you to decide whether she is right or wrong. Good-bye."

Fred brushed the tears away. Tom Gray shouldn't see him cry. He waited to kiss mamma. She looked so pale, and may be her way was best. He looked back from the entry. He would smile towards her. It would be too bad to let her go home grieving, and he remembered her arms were so small, and those stockings were only two

among many muddy ones. He had made her a great deal of trouble this morning—little mother!

He went into the school-room. Mamma waited without for three, four, five minutes. No sound of blow or cry. Six, seven minutes. All quiet within.

Then she drew a long breath and went home.

At noon two feet bounded into the kitchen and a voice exclaimed:

"Hurrah for mamma!"

"Well dear?" brightly.

"She never touched me. Not a stroke. She only looked odd around her eyes, and she read your note aloud, and she said: 'Here is a good mother.' My! I was so proud I didn't care if I did have to stay and make up my lesson. I wouldn't have you write the other 'scuse for anything."

"And how about Rob and the others?" asked his mother.

"Oh! I didn't ask. They didn't have to stay, though, 'cause they weren't gone as long. Oh! I didn't mind. When a fellow's so full of happy and proud and never meaning to be bad again, he don't think much about the others getting off easy. I say, mamma," (Fred's face was in the kitchen towel) "I say, after all, even if she had whipped, I think your way's the best. Dinner ready?"
—By ALICE ARNOLD CRAWFORD, in the *Independent*.

"FORSAKEN FOR A MOMENT."

MANY years ago, before the network of railway lines had spread its tracery over England, making a long journey, even in winter, a thing of slight consequence, William Flint dismounted from his tired horse

in the courtyard of a hotel at Salisbury, and leaving the animal to the care of the hostler, ascended to the warm, cheerful parlor, to wait until his own room should be ready.

He had been invited to Salisbury to officiate in a church whose pastor was then absent, and, weary as he was with his day's traveling, he yet felt full of eager pleasure in thinking of the morrow's duties. For preaching "the unsearchable riches of Christ" was the very passion of this man's existence, and he was well known for his fiery eloquence and deep investigations into "the hidden wisdom." So he sat, physically resting; but mentally every energy of his soul was pantingly girding itself with new power to speak once more for the Master whom he served. God had highly honored him already by owning his ministry in the conversion of souls precious in his sight; and it might be that the coming day was to be one of fresh victory over Satan, of liberty for another captive, hitherto "sold under sin."

So he mused and hoped; and ere he slept that night, earnest pleadings with God had ascended for the coveted blessings.

The Sabbath morning rose clearly calm in its rich beauty, and the appointed hour for public worship found the house of the Lord thronged, with an expectant audience. Strangers were there that morning, to hear the preacher of whom fame spoke so well. The intellectual anticipated a mental treat from one of such acknowledged ability, the curious went because it was something new, while earnest followers of Jesus hoped to have their faith strengthened by the words of a man who was known to be one of those whose life is genuine "walking with God."

The preliminary parts of the service were gone through, and Mr. Flint rose to announce the text. He turned the leaves of the large pulpit Bible with a hesitating hand, and

fluttered them to and fro as if in doubt where to pause. His hand then passed confusedly over his forehead, and an uneasy sensation began to pervade the congregation.

He had totally, as by a sudden darkening of his mind, forgotten what he had intended to say that morning. Even the text was wholly obliterated from his memory. The cold drops rose on his brow, as he again hastily turned over the leaves of the Bible in search of some familiar verse on which he might say a few extempore words. In vain. A complete and unaccountable blank had seized on all his faculties. The old promises of Scripture, which had for years been so precious to his soul, and on any of which he could have freely spoken, were closed to him now. The terrible thought rushed into his mind; that, on account of some unknown sin, the Lord had for ever rejected him from further ministrations in His Holy Name. He sank back on the narrow pulpit seat in a blank desolation of heart beyond all power of description, burying his ghastly face in his hands, to hide it from the astonished looks directed towards him on all sides.

An office-bearer, to cover the minister's strange confusion, rose and gave out a hymn. At the close of the singing, a deep cry of prayerful anguish arose from the bitterly tried servant of God. The first words of that thrilling address to infinite mercy fell on the awe-struck congregation as an echo from the darkness of Calvary :—

"My God, my God ! why hast thou forsaken me?"

He could speak to his Father out of the depths of his distress, but to Him only ; and after pouring out his agony in importunate pleadings, never to be forgotten by the hearers, he pronounced the benediction and left the chapel.

Going to his hotel, he called for his horse and rode wildly out of the city, resolving never to return to a place where he had been so forsaken and disgraced.

Four years passed away. Mr. Flint had preached all through those years as in former times. No strange confusion had ever again subjected him to mortification, and he began to regard the episode at Salisbury as something to be left with the Great Disposer. He could assign no reason for the singular occurrence. That God had not forsaken him, he was assured by the blessing which had followed his subsequent labors; and the pang of that one failure was almost forgotten; when a letter from one of the Salisbury deacons revived it in all its acuteness.

The letter contained a request that Mr. Flint would again visit the city, for the purpose of occupying the same pulpit from which he had so disastrously hurried four years ago. At first he thought he must decline; then some secret impulse seemed to urge a compliance with the request. He said to himself that surely the former visit must have been forgotten, and so wrote an acceptance of the invitation.

He was not allowed to go to a hotel on this occasion, but was entertained by one of the influential members of the church. He had scarcely entered the drawing-room, when the lady of the house came forward, and after a few words of more than formal welcome, asked in tones of deep emotion—

“Do you remember your visit to Salisbury, four years ago?”

The very thing he had hoped was forgotten thus thrust itself on him in the first moments of his arrival; from the lips of his hostess, the very first person to whom he had spoken.


He replied, with humble sorrow, “I have indeed cause to remember that most unhappy day.”

“And I,” rejoined the lady, “shall have cause to remember it with thankfulness throughout eternity.”

Mr. Flint looked at her 'with a face of eager inquiry, and she continued. "I went to the chapel, that morning, wrapped in sorrow on account of heavy trials which had recently bowed my whole being to the earth; and I felt no comfort, nor expected any. I nursed my grief in sullen endurance; for I knew not the sorrow bearer. To the opening services I gave no attention: but when your unexpected and evident confusion drew all eyes towards you, I too looked, and felt a dull, feeble sort of pity for what I knew must be your feelings of mortification. But when you began your subsequent prayer with those words: 'My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?' then my heart was touched to the quick. I knew then that in your affliction you were not alone; you had your God; and you claimed him as yours, even in the very midst of your difficulty. I too was afflicted; but I could not utter that child-cry to the Father, 'My God!' I felt that He was not mine. But that one cry of yours was the means of arousing me to seek Jesus; and, blessed be his name, I have found him; so that your coming was not in vain, since through your means I have learned to say, 'My God'."

Mr. Flint had listened to this account with full eyes and a throbbing heart.

"Henceforth," he said, humbly and solemnly, "let the Lord do with me as he pleaseth. Let me preach or be silent, let me be all or nothing, so that he but use me in his work, and save souls in his own way, not in mine!"
—*British Messenger.*



HAPPY NANCY'S SECRET.

HAPPY NANCY'S SECRET.

HERE once lived in an old brown cottage a solitary woman. She was some thirty years of age, tended her little garden, and knit and spun for a living. She was known, everywhere, from village to village, by the name of "Happy Nancy." She had no money, no family, no relatives; and was half blind, quite lame, and very crooked. There was no comeliness in her, and yet there, in that homely, deformed body, the great God, who loves to bring strength out of weakness, had set his royal seal.

"Well, Nancy, singing again," would the chance visitor say, as he stopped at her door.

"Oh! yes, I am forever at it."

"I wish you'd tell me your secret, Nancy. You are all alone, you work hard, you have nothing very pleasant surrounding you; what is the reason you're so happy?"

"Perhaps it's because I haven't got anybody but God," she replied, looking up. "You see rich folks, like you, depend upon their families and their houses: they've got to thinking of their business, of their wives and children, and then they're always mighty afraid of troubles ahead; I ain't got anything to trouble myself about, you see, 'cause I leave it all to the Lord. I think, well, if he can keep this great world in such good order, the sun rolling day after day and the stars shining night after night, make my garden things come up the same, season after season, he can sartinly take care of such a poor, simple thing as I am; and so you see, I leave it all to the Lord, and the Lord takes care of me."

"Well, but, Nancy, suppose a frost should come after your fruit-trees are all in blossom, and your plants out—suppose——"


"But I don't suppose; I never can suppose; I don't want to suppose, except that the Lord will do everything right. That's what makes you people unhappy; you're all the time supposing. Now, why can't you wait till the suppose comes, as I do, and then make the best of it?"

"Ah! Nancy, it's pretty certain you'll get to heaven, while many of us, with all our worldly wisdom, will have to stay out."

"There you are at it again," said Nancy, shaking her head, "always looking out for some black cloud. Why, if I was you, I'd keep Satan at arm's length, instead of taking him right into my heart—he'll do you a desperate sight of mischief."

Depend upon it, you would be much happier if you would follow happy Nancy's rule, and never give place in your bosom to imaginary evils.

THE BRIDGE.

 HERE was once a beautiful city which stood upon the slope of a hill; it could be seen from a great distance, and the fame of it was such that many people came from far to admire it, and to talk with its inhabitants, who were said to be a very wise race of men, skilful in all the arts of life, and constantly making new and great inventions.

One evening, a long time ago, a stranger came to this city. He had traveled a long way, and seemed weary, but he had heard so much of the city and its wise inhabitants, that he allowed himself little time for rest before he

set out to inspect the streets, and admire the large squares with their long lines of overshadowing trees, the fountains springing up and tumbling into their deep marble basins, the tall graceful spires, and the clear windows shadowed with sweeping curtains, and filled with flowering plants.

The more he saw the more he was delighted. The city was as beautiful as he had expected, and the people were wise and kind ; some of them were rich, and had houses like palaces ; others were poor ; but the rich were very good, and had built schools for their children, where they taught them the peculiar learning of the place, with various arts and trades, by which the boys soon learned to get their own living, and the girls to practice needlework and other useful arts, besides which they had them instructed in the laws which had been made by the King ; and so well were the children taught on this point that many of them knew as much about the King and his laws as their richer neighbors who had founded these schools.

The stranger thought this such a pleasant city that he wished to remain in it for a while that he might observe the manners of the people and how they employed themselves. So he went about from day to day, and observed how industrious the men were—how they built their houses and wove cloth, dug wells and made bread—and how the women spun and knitted, and took care of their children and their houses. He was pleased, too, to see the children going so regularly to their schools : and when their task was over, he often followed them into the meadows to see how happy they were gathering flowers and playing about in the long grass.

"This town of yours seems a very good place to live in," he said, one day, to a man who was weaving a basket.

"So it would be," said the man, looking up thoughtfully, "if it were not for the river."

"What river?" asked the stranger. "I have not seen or heard of any river."

"Why, no," replied the man; I dare say not, for it runs a little way out of the city, and we have planted some trees in that direction that we may not see it; you will not often hear it mentioned, for, in fact, we do not consider it good breeding to allude to it."

"But what harm does it do to the town?" asked the stranger.

"I don't wish to say much about it," replied the man, "it is a very painful subject; but the truth is, our King, whom you may have heard of, lives a long way off, on the other side of the river, and sooner or later he sends for all here to cross over. We shall certainly all have to cross before long. The King sends a messenger for us; there is scarcely a day in which some one is not sent for."

"But are they obliged to go?" asked the stranger.

"Oh, yes; they must go," replied the man, "for the King is very powerful. If he were to send for me to-day, I could not wait even to finish my work. Sometimes he sends for our wives and our children, and the messenger never waits till we are ready."

"What sort of a country is it on the other side of the river?" asked the stranger. "Is it as pleasant as it is here?"

"The river is so wide that we cannot see across it distinctly," said the man, "and when our friends and relations are once gone over, they never come back to tell us how it fares with them there. But yet every one here is agreed, and the highest evidence confirms it, that the country across the river is a far better one than this. The air is so pure that it heals all their diseases; besides, there is no such thing as poverty and trouble, and the King is very good to them, and so is his Son."

"Well, then," said the stranger, "if the country be so fine, I do not see why you should think it such a misfortune to have to go to it, particularly as you are to see all your parents and children, and friends, who have gone there before you. Why are you so much afraid to cross the river."

The man did not answer at first; he seemed to be thinking of his work; at length he looked up and said: "When any of our friends are sent for, we always say they are gone over into that beautiful country; but to tell you the truth, this river is so extremely deep and wide, and it rushes along so swiftly—"

"Well?" said the stranger.

"I don't mind telling you" replied the man, "as you do not know much about these parts, that I think it very doubtful whether many of those who plunge in can get to the opposite side at all. I am afraid the strong tide carries some of them down till they are lost. Besides, sometimes they are sent for in the dark, and, as I have said before, the messenger never waits till we are ready."

"Indeed!" said the stranger; "in that case, so far from envying these people, I wonder to see them look so happy. I should have thought they would have been so anxious lest the messenger should come. Pray, cannot your friends help you over?"

The man shook his head. "We have made a great many rafts at different times," he said, in a doubtful tone, "but they all went whirling down the stream and were wrecked. We began a bridge, too, and it cost us incredible labor, but we never could make it reach beyond the middle of the river."

"Then," said the stranger, "are there not ships to convey you over; must you need plunge alone unhelped into those dark deep waters?"

"I am not learned in these matters," said the man, evidently uneasy, "and I do not pretend to be wiser than my betters, who generally think this a disagreeable subject, and one that we should not trouble ourselves about more than we can help."

"But if you must all go?" said the stranger.

"I am a working man," replied the basket-maker, interrupting him, "and I really have no time to talk with you any further. If you want to know anything more about this, you had better go and speak to that man whom you see talking to that group of children. It is his business to teach people how to get over the river, but I have not time to attend to him. I dare say when my time comes, I shall get across as well as my neighbors."

So the stranger went up to this man who had been pointed out to him, and inquired whether he could tell him anything about that dreadful river.

"Certainly," said the man; "I shall be very glad to tell you anything you wish to know. It is my duty; I am one of the ambassadors of the King's Son. If you will come with me a little way out of the town, I will show you the river."

So he led him over several green hills, and down into a deep valley, till they came to the edge of a whirling, hurrying torrent, deep and swollen. It moved along with such a thundering noise that the stranger shuddered and said:

"I hope, sir, it is not true that all the people in the city are obliged to cross this river?"

"Yes, it is quite true," answered the man.

"Poor people!" said the stranger, "none of them can strive against such a stream as this; no doubt they are all borne away by the force of the torrent." Do you think any man could swim over here in safety?"

"No," said the man looking very sorrowful, "it is quite impossible, and we should all be lost, if it were not for the bridge."

"THE BRIDGE!" exclaimed the stranger, very much surprised. "No one told me there was a bridge."

"Oh, yes," replied the man, "there is a bridge a short distance higher up; it was built by the King's Son, and by means of it we can pass in perfect safety."

"What! may you all pass?" asked the stranger eagerly.

"Yes, all. The bridge is perfectly free, and is the only way of reaching the country beyond. All who try to swim over, or cross in any other way, will certainly be lost forever."

"Sir," said the stranger, "if this be the case, I must hasten back to the city, and tell the people that no more of them be lost in these swelling waters."

"You may certainly do so if you please," replied the man, "but know first that all the people have been duly informed of the bridge. My brethren and myself spend nearly all our time in telling them of the goodness of the King's Son, and how neither he nor his Father is willing that any should perish. But their pride is very great."

"What! so great that they would rather die than use the bridge?" asked the stranger, in astonishment.

"Some of them have built up works of their own," replied the man, "which they think are strong enough to bear them over into the King's country; others say they do not believe there is but one way of getting over, and some men throw themselves headlong into the flood, saying, they do not believe there is such a provision, or, at least, it was not meant for them. But, as I told you before, it is perfectly free, and the voice of the King's Son may sometimes be heard calling to the people over the flood, and inviting them to come to him; for, strange as

it may seem to you, he loves them, though they are so backward to believe that he means them well."

"What!" interrupted the stranger, "does not the King's Son repent of what he has done? is he not sorry that he built a bridge for such a thankless race?"

"No," said the man, "though they slight his offers of safety, he still sends ambassadors to call them to him, even at the very brink of the river. Nay, he often himself visits them by night; when all is still, he comes to their doors and knocks; if any man will open to him, he will enter and sup with him. He will tell him how he has loved our nation, and what he has done for our sake; for, indeed, it cost him very dear to build that bridge, but now it stands stronger than a rock."

Now, when the stranger heard this, he wondered greatly at the ingratitude and foolishness of these people; and, as he turned away, I went up to the ambassador, and ventured to ask him the name of that city, and the country it stood in.

But it startled me beyond measure when he told me the name of that country; for it had the same as my own!—
By JEAN INGELow.

A MOTHER'S BOY.

"**I**S there a vacant place in this bank which I could fill?" was the inquiry of a boy, as with a glowing cheek he stood before the manager.

"There is none," was the reply. "Were you told that you could obtain a situation here? Who recommended you?"

"No one recommended me, Sir," calmly answered the boy. "I only thought I would see."

There was a straightforwardness in the manner, an honest determination in the countenance of the lad, which pleased the man of business, and induced him to continue the conversation. He said:

"You must have friends who could aid you in obtaining a situation; have you told them?"

The quick flash of the deep blue eyes was quenched in the overtaking wave of sadness as he said, though half musingly:

"My mother said it would be useless to try without friends;" then recollecting himself he apologized for the interruption, and was about to withdraw, when the gentleman detained him by asking why he did not remain at school for a year or two, and then enter the business world.

"I have no time," was the reply. "I study at home, and keep up with the other boys."

"Then you have a place already," said his interrogator. "Why did you leave it?" "I have not left it," answered the boy quietly.

"But you wish to leave. What is the matter?"

For an instant the child hesitated; then he replied, with half-reluctant frankness:

"I must do more for my mother!"

Brave words! talisman of success anywhere, everywhere. They sank into the heart of the listener—recalling the radiant past. Grasping the hand of the astonished child, he said, with a quivering voice.

"My boy, what is your name? You shall fill the first vacancy for an apprentice that occurs in the bank. If, meantime, you need a friend, come to me. But now give me your confidence. Why do you wish to do more for your mother?—Have you no father?"

Tears filled his eyes as he replied, "My father is dead, my brothers and sisters are dead, and my mother and I are left alone to help each other. But she is not strong, and I wish to take care of her. It will please her, sir, that you have been so kind, and I am much obliged to you." So saying, the boy left, little dreaming that his own nobleness of character had been as a bright glance of sunshine into that busy world he had so tremblingly entered. A boy animated by a desire to help his mother will always find friends.



HOW DO YOU CARRY YOUR STICKS?

"O H dear, oh dear! I doubt it will be a bad job; I always was afraid it would turn out so!"

"What's the matter, Mrs. Carey? what's going to turn out so very bad?" asked a neighbor from the other side of the hedge; for Mrs. Carey was standing in her little garden, reading a letter that the postman had just put into her hands.

"Oh! it's our John," she replied. "I was always against his going there; but his father is so positive, he would'n't hear a word that I said. Go he should, whatever might happen."

"And what has happened?" asked old Will Bright, the neighbor, leaning on his spade, for he was digging.

"Oh, I'm afraid almost to speak the name of it," she said. "It's that dreadful listing."

"Dear heart!" said Will. "I'm sorry for that; there's a deal of danger in soldiering, I know; but many gets off safe at last, and we must hope the best for John."

"I'm not one of them as talks about hoping when I see nothing before me but trouble. Will Bright, I can't pre-

tend to that sort of contentedness," said Mrs. Carey. "I wish the father would come home, that we might settle what to do."

"There's nothing much to be done, is there? I don't fancy Carey will see his way to buying him off, or telling you to do it. I think he will be for biding quiet a bit and praying for the poor lad; only sending a line to warn him a bit."

"Sending a line! What good is there in that? It shall be fretting me to death till I know about him—how he gets on," and her eyes filled with tears.

"Well, don't take on now," said Will, kindly. "It's hard to part with them we love, I know full well; but God knows what is best for him and for you—remember that."

"He was always such a good boy to his mother," sobbed Mrs. Carey, not listening to Will's attempt to console her.

"Your loss, may be, will turn to be his gain; let that comfort you," said Will.

As she kept on sobbing, the kind old man, feeling sorry for her, asked her how long he had listed.

"'Listed! oh, he haven't listed, I hope and trust, yet," she exclaimed.

"Not listed! then what's all your trouble about?"

"Why, there's 'listing going on all about him, and he's writ to his Aunt Jane to say how nice the chaps look in their clothes, and what a pleasant time they've got of it. Jane has sent the letter on to me, and I'm sure enough what's in his head."

"Dear heart!—so he may 'list and that's all? Well, you haven't left yourself much to do when the trouble does come," said Will, laughing.

"I don't see what there is to laugh at!" exclaimed Mrs. Carey, angrily; "I shouldn't laugh at any trouble you got into."

"No; but I'd give you leave to laugh at me if I made a trouble and put myself into it of my own free will," he answered.

As he spoke Carey came home, and his wife began to tell him her trouble. He didn't speak, but, taking the letter from her, read it to himself. When he had finished he folded it, and said, "Well, what's this ado about? Are you crying for the people whose lads have listed, or because Jack hasn't done it?"

Will Bright laughed and nodded, saying, "I as good as told her how you'd take it before you came; but she would stick to her trouble."

Mrs. Carey said men hadn't feeling like women; mothers' hearts were a bit softer than stones!

"And fathers' hearts are a bit harder, that's it?" said Carey, laughing.

His wife was not going to give way to his view on the matter. "He might list; he was very likely to list; and he had been brought up so quiet, he wasn't fit for a soldiering life; he'd never take to fighting, she was sure, being so peaceable; it was the clothes and the liberty he took to; but when he got into foreign parts, and had to stand to be shot at, she knew what would be—he'd run away, and then they'd flog him, or worse, and there'd be never a friend to help him and he'd pine away and die all by himself, and she should never see him again!"

Carey let her go on, as if quite used to her folly.

Will asked him whether he meant to do anything in the matter.

"Yes; the boy was to have a holiday some time, and I shall bid him come home till we see how his mind is about

this soldiering; I don't think he is fit for a soldier, and a word of advice may save him from a foolish step."

"You're a wise man, John Carey. You carry your one stick at a time," said Will to himself as the man followed his wife into the house.

"By that rule, you mean that Mrs. Carey is a foolish woman, and carries more sticks at a time than she needs," said a woman who lived in the cottage on the other side of Will's, and who had come out on hearing voices, to know what it was all about.

Will started at her voice; he was not very fond of talking to her. He answered, a little shortly, "I never give my thoughts about my neighbors to any but themselves."

The woman laughed, and said, "Well, I'm not afraid of your saying of me that I carry more sticks than needful."

"May be you don't carry enough," said Will.

"Oh, plenty! I don't see any good in making troubles, not I. I take things as they come, and make the best of them—isn't that the way?"

Will went on digging, and a loud cry from the cottage made the women go in. She came out again, dragging a great boy with her, whom she cuffed several times, and then pushed out of the gate, telling him not to show his face for an hour or two.

"Such children they are for fighting!" she said; "one can't turn one's back a minute."

"You should learn 'em better," said Will, not leaving off his work.

"Long job that," she said, laughing.

"Send the boy to school," said Will.

"He won't go," she answered. "I did try to get him to go for a bit, but he wouldn't; so he must take his chance. His father grumbles a deal about him, and says he will come to a bad end; but I think it's not good to see trouble

so far off; I always am for being quiet, and hoping the best—isn't that the right way?"

"When we do our best, it is," said Will.

The woman was not pleased with his words or his manner. She said, a little sharply, "I wonder at you, Will Bright, seeming to make out that I don't do my best. You're not in a way to praise folks this morning; you put blame on Mrs. Carey for looking for trouble, and now you seem to put it on me for not looking for it."

"No such thing," said Will, once more resting on his spade. "I am not going to talk about Mrs. Carey; but of you I will say, I'm afraid you will have such a burden to carry at last through not bearing what you ought to do now, that it will break you down."

"Oh, don't be afraid for me!" she exclaimed. "My young ones will turn out as well as other people's I reckon. I'm not going to make myself miserable because they fight a bit, and that!" so she turned off into her cottage.

"Never a stick do you carry now; a pretty lot you'll have to bear one day, when, may be, your back will be too weak for the burden," said Will to himself, as he heard her shut her door.

He was putting by his spade, for, he had finished digging his plot, when a gardener, who supplied some who had not gardens with vegetables, came up with his cart. Will wanted a few young plants to put into his fresh digging, so he stayed to buy them. The gardener was a cheerful, talkative man, and had many a tale and joke for his customers. He told Will of gardens close to his where the things had failed, and of one or two where they had been very fine and plentiful. "Mine," he said, "has turned out betwixt and between; better than the bad, but not so good as the best." He began then to moralise upon the

different success of gardeners, and said it was strange how some people seemed to have nothing but troubles, and others nothing but good luck.

Will said he believed that there was always so much to set against the good, and so much to make up for the bad, that things were not quite so unequal as they might seem to be.

"We all have our full bundle of sticks—depend upon that: much of our comfort in life depends on how we carry them," he said.

The gardener looked curious, as if not understanding him; so he explained himself.

"I look on it that God gives to every man a bundle of sticks to carry as his burden during his life. One stick a day He means us to carry. He says, 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' If men followed his rule, to take 'the stick for the day,' it would be well; but some are so foolish, they will carry a great many, and never leave one behind: what has happened before, and what may happen again, they shoulder it all at once. Then there are others who will carry none. They neglect their proper work, their proper cares, and leave all things to turn out as they may, while they go on in what they call peace and quietness—and what happens? The bundle of sticks will have to be carried when they are not able to do it, and they will break down and cry, 'My burthen is too heavy for me to bear!'"

And this old Will said in his own way to the gardener, who listened attentively, and, looking at the cottages on each side, he whispered, "I rather fancy you've got one of a sort in those neighbors of yours; Betsy Carey is always broke down under troubles that may come. I'm uncommon glad I'm not her husband—life with her must be like a dark rainy day. And as to her" (turning his eyes to the other cottage), "I wouldn't be plagued with such a

'ne'er-do-well' for the best garden in the country. You're right Master Bright, you're right; ther 's a stick for every day; and he who carries more is his own enemy, and he who carries——well, I hardly know which is the worst! I shall remember this, and where I think it may be useful I shall say, ' Friend, how do you carry your sticks?'"—*The Sunday at Home.*

THREE GOOD LESSONS.

“ONE of my first lessons,” said Mr. Sturgis, the eminent merchant, “was in 1813, when I was eleven years old. My grandfather had a fine flock of sheep, which were carefully tended during the war of those times. I was the shepherd boy, and my business was to watch the sheep in the fields. A boy who was more fond of his book than the sheep was sent with me, but left the work to me, while he lay under the trees and read. I did not like that, and finally went to my grandfather and complained of it. I shall never forget the kind smile of the old gentleman as he said :

“Never mind, Jonathan, my boy; if you watch the sheep you will have the sheep.”

“‘What does grandfather mean by that?’ I said to myself. ‘I don’t expect to have sheep.’ My desires were moderate, and a fine buck was worth a hundred dollars. I could not exactly make out in my mind what it was, but he had been to Congress in Washington’s time; so I concluded it was all right, and I went back contentedly to the sheep. After I got into the field I could not keep his words out of my head. Then I thought of Sunday’s lesson; ‘Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things.’ I began to see

through it. 'Never you mind who neglects his duty; be you faithful, and you will have your reward.'

"I received a second lesson soon after I came to New York as a clerk to the late Lyman Reed. A merchant from Ohio, who knew me, came to buy goods, and said: 'Make yourself so useful that they cannot do without you.' I took his meaning quicker than I did that of my grandfather.

"Well, I worked upon these two ideas until Mr. Reed offered me a partnership in the business. The first morning after the partnership was made known, Mr. James Geery, the old tea merchant, called to congratulate me, and he said: 'You are all right now. I have only one word of advice to give you. Be careful who you walk the streets with.' That was lesson number three."

And what valuable lessons they are! Fidelity in all things; do your best for your employers; carefulness about your associates. Let every boy take these lessons home and study them well. They are the foundation stones of character and honorable success.—*Christian Advocate*.

THINE ENEMY.

"**Y**OU see that house, over there?" The speaker's voice quivered with excitement, and her cheeks were rosy red.

Yes, Mrs. Lee saw the house indicated, and thought the architecture very fine and imposing.

"The owner had good taste," Mrs. Harrison resumed, "but that don't amount to much when a man hasn't any thing else good about him."

"Good taste, my dear, is simply the effect of a certain good cause in the human soul. A man who can plan a

beautiful house like that, who can lay out and ornament such grounds, must of necessity have a good thing somewhere. A man with a layer of the esthetic in his nature can not be wholly bad."

"Rum built that house, Mrs. Lee. To me there is nothing beautiful about it. I never look at it without I see the bloodshot eyes of his victims looking out of the windows at me. Ugh! it is horrible. Just think how he has murdered by the wholesale. Think of the families he has desolated. If ever a man in this world deserved the gallows that man does."

Mrs. Lee changed the subject. Singularly enough, her great heart took in the rum seller as well as the rum drinker. Her experience had shown her all sides. She knew that her enemy was as dear to the good Lord as her best friend. She was aware that a declaration of her principles would cause all future influence with her impulsive friend to be null and void; so she wisely kept quiet. The two friends walked on, Mrs. Lee's sympathies going out in a steady loving current to every class of sinners, and Mrs. Harrison wondering if it would be possible to pass a law which should put an end, not only to rum selling, but to rum sellers.

"There he comes now!" exclaimed Mrs. Harrison.

"Who?" inquired her companion.

"Oh! that wretch! that fiend! our delightful neighbor, the rum seller!"

Mrs. Harrison cast her eyes down. She would not lift them again until Beelzebub had passed! not she.

Mrs. Lee looked up into a pair of earnest, grey eyes, smiled pleasantly, and with a kind "good morning" which was immediately and almost impulsively returned, passed on. Mrs. Harrison was furious.

"Do you mean to tell me, my dear, that in this quiet country place you pass your neighbors without speaking to them?" inquired Mrs. Lee, doing her best not to notice her friend's anger.

"Have I not told you what a monster he is? Speak to him? No! I never have, and I never will."

"We differ a little, my friend, in our way of looking at things; but let us not quarrel over that. We are all God's children—all members of one great family. Your moral advantages have perhaps been greater than your neighbor's. He is not to be scorned for that. At least this is my argument, the way I feel, the way my conscience compels me to act. If your convictions are the other way, you must obey them; but let us choose for ourselves with perfect freedom. I can not pass that man in this quiet country neighborhood without speaking to him, and be true to myself. You can not speak to him, and satisfy your conscience. I am to be your guest for a number of weeks, and do you not see that there will be no chance of harmony unless we can cherish and act out our own opinions?"

Mrs. Harrison confessed that she knew such was the case; but the sullenness of her answer showed that she could have no sympathy for her companion's views.

The rum seller must have mentioned this greeting of Mrs. Lee to his wife, for, one day, returning from the depôt with Mrs. Harrison, a very sweet-faced woman bent forward from her carriage, and bowed and smiled to Mrs. Lee.

"Who is that?" the lady inquired, in astonishment.

"Oh, that is the rum seller's wife," Mrs. Harrison answered, with considerable disdain. "They find so few willing to recognize them, that they are very quick to notice any attention."

Mrs. Lee's mind was made up. She would call upon this family. There was a longing in that woman's eyes that she could not resist. Silver and gold the rum seller's wife had in plenty, but that sympathy which comes from contact with kindly human hearts she was a stranger to. It so happened that when Mrs. Lee put her resolve into execution she found the lady of the house away, and the rum seller only at home.

"My wife will be very much disappointed," he said, his voice full of regret. "I wish you would wait a few moments for her."

Mrs. Lee expressed her willingness to wait, and the host conducted her to the library, a large, elegant room, and settled himself to entertain her. The man's face was eloquent with thanks. He seemed quite unfit for ordinary conversation, and once or twice gave grateful utterance to his feelings.

"I am so glad you have come to see my wife," he said — "so glad."

Now Mrs. Lee was a straightforward little woman, and it seemed quite natural that she should ask him why he was glad.

"Is your wife very much alone?" she inquired.

"We have occasional company from the city," he replied. Mrs. Lee was very sure that she saw the blood redden his temples, as he continued, "but we have lived here two whole years, and you are the first woman in the neighborhood who has stepped foot over our threshold. My wife's health is very delicate," he went on slowly, and with a quiver in his voice. "Sometimes I fear that I shall not have her much longer."

If there is anything in the world equal to a pure, deep-hearted woman's intuitions, let us know what it is. Mrs. Lee knew then, just as well as if she had been told, that

this wife was dying of remorse and slight. She might never have another so good opportunity for a conversation with this man, whom the neighbors despised; so she asked, her whole soul in her face,

"What is the matter with your wife?"

"There doesn't seem to be any disease that the doctors can discover. She is weak and tired, and low-spirited all the time. I have tried everything, and every body, but she doesn't seem to mend under any treatment."

"I doubt very much if she needs any treatment, except, perhaps, that which you can give her."

The red blood mounted again to the temples of her companion.

"I give her, madam," he tried to say laughingly. "I am not a physician."

"I feel very certain that you are all the physician she needs. Your wife, I presume, needs, wants, must have, to save her life, just one thing. If a fever patient wanted water, you would think it very foolish and wicked to offer coffee, and tea, and lemonade, would you not? in short, everything but the one the thirsty soul longed for."

"Certainly," he answered, glancing toward the door. "Have you ever talked with my wife?"

"Never, sir."

"Of course, you know what my business is?"

"I do."

"And you consider it infamous, and all that sort of thing?"

"I consider it the worst business that any man can be engaged in."

"Then what do you come here for?"

There was a mixture of sadness and fierceness in the tones that made her heart ache.

"O! I forget; you came to pay your respects to my wife, my victim."

"And to see you, also," was the low, earnest answer. "Long ago, my dear sir, I learned to discriminate between the sinner and the sin. I loathe the sin, but I love you, and would help you in any way in my power."

"Your words sound very strange, and sweet," he said after a moment's pause. "My wife wants me to go into another kind of business, to give the money I have made in this to the amelioration of the condition of—of—." The words were hard to utter.

"Of the families of drunkards," suggested Mrs. Lee, in the same sweet voice.

"Yes, that is it. How well you understand her. This is a hard thing for a man to do. Remember, Mrs. Lee, that I am a wholesale liquor dealer. I never peddled drinks from a bar; don't think that of me."

"In proportion as the wholesale is larger than the retail, just in proportion is your sin larger than the man's who deals out to individuals what you supply him with."

"You don't mean that," he urged.

"Every word of it. Your wife's desire is perfectly just, in every respect, and I trust that the Lord will, through her love and purity, incline your heart to do His will."

Just here the pale, tender-eyed, wife glided in with a greeting which spoke volumes.

"I am so glad to see you, dear madam!" she said. "I told my husband that if you did not come to see us, I should send for you, didn't I dear?" and the thin little hand caressed her husband's arm affectionately.

"And I told my wife that there wasn't the least hope of your coming; but her eyes sometimes see farther than mine."

"Husband told me," she went on, "that he met a lady who bowed to him, and who, he thought, would do me good. O! I was so glad. I had asked God so many times to send me a friend; and"—drawing close to Mrs. Lee—"if I could have picked one out myself, I could not have been better suited."

"Our dear Father answers our prayers, sometimes, according to our desires," said Mrs. Lee, taking the thin hand in hers.

"Yes, and sometimes He doesn't seem to answer them at all. O, Mrs. Lee, I have prayed one prayer so long, so faithfully, so hard, without getting an answer, that I am almost discouraged. It is about him," pointing to her husband. "You don't know, I never can tell how kind and how loving he has been to me, ever since he married me. He thinks I am sick, because he sees me failing every day. I am not. Only for one thing, I should be as healthy and happy as any body. Won't you please kneel down and ask God to answer my prayer?"

Mrs. Lee could hardly see the pleading woman for her tears, but she wiped them away, and looked up at the husband. His fine face was drawn with pain, and his whole manner that of one who suffers keenly.

"If you can do such things, Mrs. Lee, please oblige her," he said, with an effort at sternness.

Mrs. Lee's petition was earnest, touching, and to the point. Words could not have been more simple and eloquent. When she rose from her knees the rum seller, with his wife in his arms, was sobbing like a child.

"God has heard! God has heard! Oh, Mrs. Lee, he has promised to do the right. You know what Christ said, When two or three are gathered together, I will be there! You see I have had to pray alone all these years."

Oh, my love! husband! I shall be well now, and strong enough to help you."

"Yes, wife; I believe you will," was the solemn answer. "And now, Mrs. Lee, I want you to hear me promise before God to do in this matter now, and in the future, just as my wife directs, even if the doing makes me a beggar."

"As much as my husband loves me, I should never have succeeded alone," the wife continued, after he had left the room. "A curse or a threatening word would have settled the question forever. You came pitying and loving both of us, and the work was accomplished. Oh, Mrs. Lee, how many are suffering and dying for the right word."

"I hear," said Mrs. Harrison, a week afterwards, "that Ed. Lothrop has left the liquor business altogether. Somebody said he gave two thousand dollars to the temperance missionaries yesterday. Do you believe it?"

"I think it is true," was Mrs. Lee's quiet answer.

"Well; wonders never will cease. Let's go and call on his wife sometime."—*By ELEANOR KIRK, in Zion's Herald.*

DR. JOHN.

JOHNNY'S father was a doctor. Johnny had come to the conclusion that he would be a doctor, too, when he got to be a man; for, Johnny loved his father very much; and thought the things his father did were just the right things to do.

But Johnny was tired of waiting to be a man. He had waited so long—a whole week, in fact; for it was a week before the morning of which I am writing, that Johnny had come to the conclusion, and had climbed upon his father's knee and told him his plan.

He didn't see as he was any nearer being a man for all this time, and Johnny was discouraged. He went trudging along to his father's office, all bundled up in his tippet, his warm mittens, and his little fur cap, but he wasn't happy a particle; although he was dragging a pretty red sled after him, and had twenty-five cents in his pocket, a jack-knife, and lots of other things. He was so tired of being called "Johnny," and eating peanuts, and waiting to be a man! He wanted to be Dr. John at once, and wear boots that would stamp and squeak on the side-walk, and have folks come and ring the bell for him in the middle of the night, and race their horses all into a white foam around the mouth to carry him somewhere.

Johnny went into his father's office and sat down to warm his fingers. His father was out, but Morris, the boy, was in the back room.

"I can play I am a doctor, anyhow," said Johnny, after he had looked into the fire awhile, and his face brightened as he unwound his tippet and threw his cap and mittens on the floor. He pushed his father's black morocco-cushioned chair to the table, and climbed into it, crossed one leg over the other, and taking a great newspaper, glanced over it in a wise doctor-like way.

Pretty soon there were light steps at the door, and the door was opened very still, and a little girl about Johnny's size came in. She was shivering with cold, and there were tears on her face, and one little bared hand was holding up the other arm. She stopped at the door and looked around till she met Johnny's eyes over the top of the paper.

"I want the doctor," she said, half crying.

Johnny put down the paper and looked at her. She was such a trembling little thing, he wasn't afraid of her a particle, so he coughed and said:

"Yes, ma'am. Be you sick?"

"Yes, my wrist is sprained awfully, and my mother said to have him put something on it. Is he at home?"

"No, he ain't," said Johnny. "But I am, and that'll be just as good. I am Dr. John."

"Oh!" said the little girl, and she looked hard at the new young doctor.

"How did you sprain it?" inquired Johnny, coming to business.

"Oh, I was a sliding down hill—on my feet, you know, 'cause I hain't got no sled—and there was a girl, she came right against me with a peaked sled and fell me over and—Oh dear me!" and the little girl whimpered and rubbed her wrist.

Dr. John kicked against the chair. "Is 'it sprained right in two?" he asked.

"No, it ain't," said the little girl.

"If it was 'twould have to be sewed together, I suppose; but if it ain't, I don't most know what. Lemme see it."

The little girl edged up to the table in a bashful way, and pushing back her apron sleeve, showed a little red chapped wrist. Dr. John looked from the wrist, to the floor, and from the floor back to the wrist, and wondered what to say.

"I suppose it aches inside," he remarked at last.

"Yes," said the little girl; "in where the bones be."

"Of course;" and Dr. John looked at her as if she had said a wise thing. Then he wondered what to do next. At last a bright idea came.

"I guess a new sled would be good."

The little girl looked up with bright eyes.

"'Cause if you had one they couldn't bunt you over when you were sliding down hill, and if they did you could bunt back into them."

"Yes," said the little girl, forgetting all about her aching wrist. "And—O my—it's nice up on Wilson's Hill."

"Won't your mother buy you a sled?" inquired Dr. John.

The little girl's lip quivered, and she looked down.

"She hasn't got any money."

Dr. John's eyes went to his sled, by the side of the stove. The little girl's eyes followed his, and rested upon it too.

"Oh, well, here's one!" he said, jumping down from his chair. "I'm getting pretty big, and I sha'n't want it any more;" and he dragged the sled up to her.

The little girl's face shone under the stains of tears as she took the handle. She tugged in her pocket, and bringing up a five-cent piece handed it to Dr. John.

"What's that?" he inquired.

"That's to pay—ma said so—for curing my wrist."

"Oh, yes!" and Dr. John dropped the coin into his pocket, and the little girl went off dragging the sled, with no signs of aches or sprains about her.

That afternoon when Dr. John had gone home, this same little girl came to the office bringing back the sled. The real doctor was in this time, and the little girl cried, and said her mother would not let her keep the sled. The real doctor got the whole story, and then he laughed, and sent the little girl home again with the sled and some medicine for her wrist, and a note to her mother saying that he wanted his boy always to stick to his bargains. When he went home that night he took Dr. John, in his red flannel night gown, on his knee, and told him he was a nice doctor for his medicine wasn't bad to take. Dr. John hugged up to his father, and said he wished he was a man and had as much as a hundred dollars, and he would go around buying sleds for poor little girls and boys and making them happy.

Dr. John used to go up on Wilson's Hill once in a while after that, and when he saw how happy the little girl with the red sled was, I don't think he was sorry he gave it to her for medicine. He draws her on it too, once in a while, and although she is poor, and he is rich, they are very good friends now. The real doctor smiles when he sees them together, and calls her Johnny's first patient.—*Youth's Companion*.

DOING AND BEING.

“**H**ERE!” exclaimed Marion fretfully, as she turned from the window, “the day is all gone, and I haven’t done any thing. I haven’t done *any thing*!” she repeated, discontentedly; “and I meant to do so much.”

“What have you done?” inquired Elizabeth, closing her work-basket. “Sit down and tell me.”

“Well,” answered Marion, seating herself, “you know my day as well as I do. This morning I read three chapters in the Bible, as usual. I do want to get through it this year. Then I was gone an hour on that errand for father; then I wrote three letters, mended Tom’s mittens, and corrected Nellie’s composition; then mother called me to set the dinner table. After dinner I directed a magazine and two papers to your missionary; then—O! Nellie’s arithmetic—that took me an hour, she was so stupid; then father asked me to copy a deed for him, and then that tiresome Mrs. Green called, and I entertained her for an hour; and then—how little it all seems!—I went out to get sewing-silk for mother, and buy that ball I’ve been promising Georgie for a month; and now the

man is lighting the gas over the way, and my day is gone! I can't help feeling dissatisfied; I haven't done any thing good to-day."

Elizabeth was rocking lazily to and fro in her chair. "You think a great deal about doing—don't you?"

"Yes, and so do you! You are always at work doing something."

"It's a good thing to be so. God gives us many things to *do*; but don't you think he gives us something to *be*, just as well?"

"Oh, yes!" very quickly. "Of course."

"May I speak plainly, Marion? May I tell you all about your unsatisfying day?"

"You dear old Elizabeth!" Marion sprang up and threw both her arms about her neck; "you ought to have been born my grandmother. 'faithful are the wounds of a friend.' Shoot me through and through; I will not even groan." Nevertheless Marion's lips trembled as she dropped down on the carpet at her friend's feet, and laid her head on her lap.

Before speaking, Elizabeth bent over to kiss her. "I've been thinking all day as I have watched you, dear, that I would like to say this to you. I see that, in trying to *do* what He commands, you forgot to *be* what He commands. I know all about it. First about reading three chapters every day. How did you read them?"

"Hurried through the last," confessed Marion; "and I did look to see if it was short. I feel condemned if I don't read it through when I set myself to do it."

"You poor child! We will talk about that some other time. Then came the errand for your father; you fretted about that, because you said you were wasting your time. You answered your mother saucily when she inquired whom your letters were written to; you scolded Tom for

burning his mittens; you made fun of Nellie's spelling, and set her lips to quivering; you spoke impatiently to your mother about setting the dinner-table "

" And Betsey ought to do it, I repeat it," interrupted the girl, wilfully.

" And you slapped Georgie for hiding the paper you were looking for."

" I am sorry for that," said a voice from under Marion's curls.

" You scolded Nellie for being stupid, until she cried; you frowned over the paper you copied for your father; and did you not make fun of Mrs. Green before she had reached the corner?"

" O, dear! tell me about *being*." Marion looked up with penitent eyes. " I will think about being, if you will help me."

" God says, ' Be kindly affectioned one to another.'

" ' Be ye also patient.'

" ' Be ye thankful.'

" ' Be not conformed to this world.'

" ' Become little children.'

" ' Be ye therefore perfect.'

" ' Be courteous.'

" ' Be not wise in your own conceits.'

" ' Be not overcome of evil. '"

Marion listened, making no reply.

Twilight grew unto darkness. The tea-bell sounded, bringing Marion to her feet. In the firelight Elizabeth could see that her cheeks were wet.

" I'll have a better day to-morrow, God helping me. I see that doing grows out of being."

" We cannot be what God loves without doing all that he commands. It is easier to do with a rush than to be

patient, or kind, or forgiving, or gentle, or unselfish, or humble, or just, or watchful."

"I should think it was," returned Marion, emphatically.—*Christian Standard*.

ALL FOR CHRIST.

"**N**OW, girls, I have got news for you?"

The speaker was a showy girl, dressed in the height of fashion. She was just entering a room where sat several ladies, her cousins pursuing various household employments.

"What is it Ada?" cried one and another.

"You'll never believe it; Lizzie Ashbrook has professed religion!" was the half-serious, half-laughing reply.

"Lizzie Ashbrook," said the elder cousin, Julia, seriously: "why, she was forever making sport of the subject."

"And such a fashionable girl; why, she would hardly look at a girl who was meanly dressed," remarked another.

"Her father an infidel too; what will he say?"

"I heard that he turned her out of the house," said Ada.

There was a long silence.

"Well,"—it was abruptly spoken by the youngest of the family—"we shall see now if there is that reality in religion that Christians talk about. I don't believe there is one single person in any branch of her family who is religious. She will have unusual trials to undergo; I would not be in her place."

"Trials! pshaw! there's no such thing as persecution in these days; it would be a rare thing to see a martyr!" This was lightly spoken by Ada, who had been Lizzie's

nearest friend, and who felt unusual bitterness springing up in her heart against the young girl, who she knew could no longer enjoy her companionship as of yore.

Martyrs are not rare, even in these days! aye, and martyrs to religious persecution, as we shall see.

The cousins made an early call on Lizzie, who received them with her accustomed grace, and a sweeter smile than usual. Yet she was pale, and though there was a purer expression in her beautiful face, yet she appeared like one wearied a little with some struggle in which she was the sufferer. Although she did not speak directly of the new vows she had taken upon her, the new peace she had found, her visitors could see distinctly and clearly the wondrous change in dress, in manner, and even in countenance.

Lizzie was engaged in marriage to a thorough man of the world. George Phillips loved his wine, race-course, the theatre, the convivial free-and-easy club. The Sabbath was his day of pleasure, and many a time had Lizzie graced his elegant equipage, radiant in beauty on the holy day, as they swept along. He bore a dashing exterior, was intellectual, a wit, courted, caressed, admired, everywhere.

His brow darkened as he heard the news. What! the girl of his choice, the woman he would place at the head of his brilliant household, become a canting Christian! Nonsense, he didn't believe it; he would set for himself. He didn't furnish his parlors for prayer-meetings, he wanted no long-faced ministers, elders, or sisters to visit his wife, not he. It was a ridiculous hoax; it must have originated in the clubroom. What! the daughter of Henry Ashbrook, the freest of freethinkers! "Ha! a capital joke—a very clever joke—nothing more!"

He called upon her not long after the visit before mentioned. His cold eye scanned her from head to foot—but how sweetly, how gently she met him! Surely, the voice that was melting music before was heavenly in its tones now. All the winning grace was there, all the high-bred ease—the merry smile dimpled her cheek—but there was something, a subtle something, that thrilled him from head to foot with apprehension, because it was unlike her usual self. What could it be?

At length, lightly, he referred to the report he heard. For one moment the frame trembled, the lips refused to speak—but this passed, and something like a flush crossed her beautiful face—it lighted the eyes anew, it touched the cheek with a rich crimson, as she replied—“George, please don’t treat it as a jest, for truly, thank God! I have become a Christian! O, George!” her clasped hands were laid upon one of his. “I have only just begun to live! If you knew—”

The proud man sprang to his feet, almost throwing her hands from him in his impatient movement; and not daring to trust his voice, for an oath was uppermost, he walked swiftly back and forth for a moment. Then he came and stood before her. His forehead was purpled with the veins that passion swelled, his face white, and his voice unsteady as he exclaimed—

“Do you mean to say that you will really cast your lot among these people that you will give up all, *all*?”

“I will give all for Christ;” the words were very soft and low, and not spoken without reflection.

For one moment he locked his lips together, till they looked like steel in their rigidity; then he said in a full passionate voice,—

“Lizzie—Miss Ashbrook, if these are your sentiments, these your intentions, we must go different ways.”

This was very cruel; it was a terrible test, for the young girl had, as it were, placed her soul in his keeping. Before a higher and purer love was born in her heart, he had made up her human love—an absolute idolatry—and the thought of forever losing him now caused her cheek to grow ashen, and her eyes dim.

As he saw this, his manner changed to entreaty.

He placed before her the position he would give her, and urged her by every argument that might appeal to the womanly heart. And he knew how to win by entreaty, by the subtlest casuistry. His was a masterly eloquence, his very looks, with the most adroit cunning, gave aid to the subject and object of his discussion. More than once the gentle spirit of the young Christian felt as if giving way—that only help direct from the Fountain of Life could sustain her, with firmness to resist to the end of the interview.

At last it was a final: "All this will I give you if you will fall down and worship me." It came to this: "Christ or me." • There could be no compromise; it was "Christ or me." And standing there clothed in a mantle of new and heavenly faith, with its light shining in her heart and playing over her pale features, she said with the firmness of martyrs of old,

"CHRIST!"

Though his soul was filled with rage, so that he could have gnashed his teeth, the slight figure standing there in its pure white robes, the eye that cast an earnest upward glance, the brow that seemed to have grown white with spirit light, the attitude, so self-possessed, yet so modest, so quiet, and yet so eloquent, filled him with a strange admiring awe. But the hostility toward religion was so strong in his heart, that it bore down all his tenderness,

almost crushed his love, and he parted from her for the first time, coldly, and like a stranger.

The engagement was broken off; but who can tell the struggles it cost.

This was but the first trial; there came another yet, while the blow lay heavy on her heart.

Her father had ever been very loving toward her. He was proud of her; she was the brightest gem of his splendid home. She was beautiful, and gratified his vanity; she was intellectual, and he heard praise lavished upon her mind with a miser's greedy ear, for she was his—part of himself, she belonged to him.

He called her into his study, and required a minute account of the whole matter. He had heard rumors, he said, had seen a surprising and not an agreeable change in her; she had grown mopishly quiet; what was the cause? It was a great trial, with that stern, unbelieving face, full of hard lines, opposite, to stand and testify for Christ. But he who has promised was with her, and she told the story calmly, resolutely, kindly.

“And do you intend to be baptized?”

“Yes, sir,”—a gleam of hope entering her heart; she did not expect his approval, but she could not think he might refuse to sanction this important step.

“You know your aunt Eunice has long wanted you to become an inmate of her house.”

• “Yes, sir,” the gentle voice faltered.

“Well, you can go now. Unless you can give up this absurd idea, and trample it under your feet, I do not wish you to remain with me. Be as you were before, and you shall want for no luxury, no affection; follow this miserable notion, and henceforth I am your father only in name.”

And still, though her heart was broken, she said, as she had before,

"CHRIST."

She did forsake all for him, but her step became slow, her form wasted, her eye hollow, her cheek sunken. The struggle had been too much for a frame unable to cope with any overwhelming sorrow. Swiftly she went down into the valley, but it was not dark to her. Too late the man who had so sorely tempted her, knelt by the side of her bed and implored her for forgiveness. Too late? No, not too late for his own salvation, for in that hour his eyes were open to the sinfulness of his life, and by her dying pillow he promised to give his heart to God. Her father, too, proud infidel that he was, looked on his wasted child, triumphing over death, with wonder and with awe. Such a dying scene it is the privilege of but few to witness. She had given up *all*, absolutely *all* for Christ, and in the last hour, like Stephen, she saw heaven open. Her face was angelic, her language rapture, her chamber the gate of heaven. And like one who, but the other day, untied the sandals of life, and moved calmly and trustingly down the one step between earth and heaven, so she said with a smile inexpressibly sweet—"Sing."

And they sang, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me!"

At its close they heard one word—the last. It was—
"CHRIST."

***A QUESTION WITH ONLY ONE ANSWER.**



YOUNG man from the provinces, who was sent to Paris to finish his education, had the misfortune of getting into bad company. He went so far as to wish and to say, There is no God. God was only a word. After staying several years in the capital, the young man returned to his family. One day he was invited to a respectable house, where there was a numerous company. While all were entertaining themselves with news, pleasures, and business, two girls, aged respectively twelve and thirteen, were seated in a bay window, reading together. The young man approached them, and asked:—

“What beautiful romance are you reading so attentively, young ladies?”

“We are reading no romance, sir; we are reading the history of God’s chosen people.”

“You believe then that there is a God?”

Astonished at such a question, the girls looked at each other, the blood mounting to their cheeks.

“And you, sir—do you believe it?”

“Once I believed it; but after living in Paris, and studying philosophy, mathematics, and politics, I am convinced that God is an empty word.”

“I, sir, was never in Paris; I have never studied philosophy, or mathematics, or all those beautiful things which you know; I only know my catechism. But since you are so learned, and say there is no God, you can easily tell me whence the egg comes?”

“A funny question, truly; the egg comes from the hen.”

“And now, sir, whence comes the hen?”

“You know, that as well as I do, miss; the hen comes from the egg.”

"Which of them existed first, the egg or the hen?"

"I really do not know what you intend with this question and with your hen; but yet that which existed first was the hen."

"There is a hen, then, which did not come from an egg?"

"Beg your pardon, miss; I did not take notice that the egg existed first."

"There is, then, an egg which did not come from a hen?"

"O! if you—beg pardon—that is—you see—"

"I see, sir, that you do not know whether the egg existed before the hen, or the hen before the egg."

"Well, then, I say the hen."

"Very well; there is, then, a hen which did not come from an egg. Tell me, now, who made this first hen, from which all other hens and eggs come?"

"With your hens and your eggs, it seems to me you take me for a poultry-dealer."

"By no means, sir: I only asked you to tell me whence the mother of all hens and eggs come."

"But for what object?"

"Well, since you do not know, you will permit me to tell you. He who created the first hen, or, as you would rather have it, the first egg, is the same who created the world; and this being we call God. You, who cannot explain the existence of a hen, or an egg without God, still wish to maintain that you are able to explain the existence of this world without God."

The young philosopher was silent, and quietly took his hat, and full of shame, departed.—*Translated from the French.*



ST. LUCILLE.

“ I am not a gypsy ; I tell no fortunes, I know them not, only God knows. I make baskets ; they are not handsome, but good, strong.”

It is St. Lucille who says this, standing at my back-door one sunny August afternoon ; a tiny woman, who might as well have said, “ I’m not a fairy or a brownie ;” but I saw at once that she had been rudely driven from some doors as a gypsy fortune-teller, and in a nervous, sensitive way sought at the very outset to shield herself from similar misunderstandings.

Poor little Lucille ! she wasn’t one of the grand, heroic saints, who stand up brave and bright, clothed with a glorious strength. Under her uncouth Shaker bonnet, twice too large for the small head it covers, you see a thin, brown face, smooth, gray hair, parted over a wrinkled forehead ; her little brown hands, small enough for a child of ten years, tremble with the weight of her baskets : by virtue of her tiny stature and shrinking ways she is a child ; in view of sixty years of endurance, of labor, of unswerving faith and patience, she is a woman and a saint.

Her broken speech, as well as her graceful manners and the nervous gestures of her little brown hands, mark her as a French Canadian.

“ What is the price of this basket ?”

“ Fifty cents ; but if you like not to give fifty, give me forty, or whatever the lady please, for I have been out all day, and sold not one ; or if you give me some old bed-quilt for a basket, I thank you. I not beg ; only the lazy beg : but winter will come very cold ; my husband ten years sick with rheumatism ; he so cold ; he no meat at all on his bones, no meat at all,” pinching up, as she

spoke, the scanty flesh of her own fragile little hand. "In the winter he crazy with cold and with pain." No wonder then that in the burning August afternoon she was so keenly alive to the miseries of winter.

"And what supports you through all this sickness and trouble?" There was a little upward gesture of reverence, and the answer came; misinterpreting my use of the word support, but shaming my want of trust.

"The Lord, he support us."

Then I ventured to ask,—shall I dare call it a more practical question, for what so practical as the inquiry whence comes the inspiration that carries us through every difficulty, and furnishes daily the very breath of life, if not its bread? "But how do you get food and clothing?" And then I noticed the little old-fashioned woollen cape, twenty years old if it was a day, pinned across her breast, and the mite of a checked apron that covered her faded dress.

"I make baskets," was the answer. "Every one that has not sickness can work" (this with the quiet dignity of a princess).

When I had searched my store of bedding, and, feeling less sure of a cold winter than she did, found a warm coverlid that could be spared, I hardly dared to ask her acceptance of it, inasmuch as she was "so strong and could work," and it is "only the lazy who beg." But a lovely look of surprise lighted up the withered face as I offered it, and she only said: "The Lord did direct you, He did direct you," and, rising to go, she suddenly took my hand and kissed it. In a minute more she was gone. The fence at the head of the yard completely concealed her small figure, and I stood at the door with tears in my eyes; they come back now at the thought of her; not a New England woman, whose work is almost her God, and whose

down-lying and up-rising are but parts of the plan whereby she is to accomplish so much cooking and scrubbing and washing and ironing; but a little, fragile, light-hearted body, made for a butterfly, but forced to tear off her wings and become an ant; and turning the light of her natural gayety into a holy glow that served to keep this dark life bright.

I cannot forget her; among these winter storms I see a picture that is not painful, although it shows poverty, suffering, weariness and cold, for there is a grace, a good cheer, an unconscious heroism about it—little Lucille, earning all unwittingly her crown of glory.—*Old and New.*

LOVING THE SINNER.

HER STORY.

I NEVER turn any one from my door hungry, but we have so many applicants for something to eat that I do not always feel the necessity of treating them personally; but this time, when my cook with a very sad face asked me to please step into the hall, I knew that no ordinary beggar awaited me.

“Well, sir?” said I, as I looked up into a pale handsome face, quite reassured by his gentlemanly manner, “is there any thing I can do for you?”

“Yes, madam,” he answered earnestly, and with cultured intonation; “you can give me something to eat, for I am very hungry.”

As he came slowly in, at my invitation, I noticed that his steps were slightly unsteady, and that he appeared weak and suffering. Some poor fellow, with a sad domestic history, I thought, just recovering from a long sickness. The idea of intoxication never presented itself.

Here was an educated, handsome, dignified gentleman. His clothes bore the appearance of long travel, but they were of fine texture and fashionably made. His hands were very white, and very slender; and I noticed, as he drank the coffee I handed him, that they trembled painfully.

"Have you been ill?" I asked.

"Ill, madam?" he answered. "Ill, yes; ill unto death—so ill that I shall never recover; but (with a groan) not in the way your kind heart supposes."

"We are often mistaken," I answered, "in our first impressions, but do not be afraid to tell me what your trouble is. I shall sympathize with it, whatever it may be."

"Do you not see," he replied, extending his hands, with a gesture of despair, "what is the matter with me? I am weak and unnerved from the effects of liquor, madam; that is my trouble. I did not mean to deceive you. Shall I go?"

"Go?" I said, putting my hand on his arm, "Go? Why, bless your heart, what do you take me for? Stay and refresh yourself, and, if you feel like it, tell me all about it."

"I am not sober enough to tell you now," he replied. I wish I could; but this much I can always tell, drunk or sober; I have a perfect passion for alcoholic stimulants. When I am where they can be bought, I must drink. I am trying now to get to some place in the heart of the country, where the damnable stuff is not sold. Do you think I can find such a spot? Rum has broken up my family; rum has killed my mother; and there is no help for me here or hereafter."

I replenished his cup, and filled his plate. There seemed to be really nothing I could do but to attend to his temporary physical wants. By his own confession he was too much intoxicated to talk con-

nectedly, and of course, under such circumstances, words of mine would be useless. "Poor child!" escaped from my lips involuntarily. He heard, looked up quickly, dashed away some tears, and said, with the sweetest smile I ever saw on mortal man's face, "And you pity me? 'Poor child! poor child!'" he repeated, with an accent of fondness.

"How many times mother has said 'poor child' to me! And you pity me?"

"I pity, and I love you," I answered. "I yearn over you, as I pray God some mother would yearn over my boy in a like position! And if I, a perfect stranger, can care for you in this manner, how much more must your Heavenly Father love you!"

"But, madam," he sobbed, "I have no will, no power to assert myself when liquor is before me. Just think how the banners of invitation are thrown out from every street corner in this city. If I only could make some one understand the longing, the feverish thirst, the ravenous, consuming desire which takes possession of my whole being when I see, smell, or hear of the soul-destroying stuff, I believe I should be arrested and confined for a maniac. If I only could find the right spot in the country, perhaps—oh, madam, who knows but I might get back some of my lost manhood?"

Oh, how my heart ached for the poor fellow; but with a house full of children, and my husband always unwilling to extend hospitality to the evil-doer, I was powerless, as far as personal influence was concerned. The coffee and the good substantial lunch had had their usual humanizing effects, and as he rose from the table I was pleased to see that his step was once more firm, and a little color had risen to his poor, pale face.

"I am better now," he said softly, "and if I dared I should ask God to bless you for your great kindness; but whatever else I am, I have never been profane."

"Don't talk in that way," I interrupted, "and don't allow yourself to go on misinterpreting the character of your Heavenly Father. He is all love and mercy; 'He so loved the world as to give His only Son'—for what? for whom? For just such poor sinners as you and I. He sees your temptations, understands why your will lacks force, and makes every possible allowance for whatever you may have inherited."

"How strange this all sounds!" he said again very softly. "How strange and how sweet;—but——"

"There are no 'buts' with God," I put in quickly; "and it is the meanest kind of profanity to use them. Now you talk about going into the country! The devil invariably gets the best of every body who turns the back on him. It has got to be a hand-to-hand, face-to-face, up-and-down, square fight; and if you ask God to help you I know you can utterly annihilate this enemy."

"I will try" he answered firmly; and as the words left his lips a convulsive chill crept over him, and he was again as pale as death. I went up stairs and got him a clean collar and neck-tie, brushed his clothes, put a clean handkerchief in his pocket, with a few pamphlets I wanted him to read, tucked a bill into his vest, and then my courage and self-possession left me, and I broke down into a fit of sobbing.

"I will try as I never tried before," he resumed. Taking my hand and placing it on his head, he said, "Now, give me your benediction."

I gave it, and he walked away, grave and solemn, but with a new light in his eyes—a strange something that

made me thrill with happiness. Oh ! I wonder what has become of him.

HIS STORY.

I am going to her to-morrow, to tell her what she has done for me. I determined to wait till I was sure of reformation. I must never disappoint her—the good angel God sent to lead me out of the mire of sin and temptation. When I went from her presence, on that day ever to be remembered, I felt that a new strength had been given me. I could hold my head up and look about me. Her blessed words kept singing in my heart, and, for the first time since I became a drunkard, I felt that, with God's help, I could put an end to the demon who had so long and so effectually ruled me. I believe I have done it, or rather she has accomplished it. How kind God was to send me there—I, a poor drunken wretch, to be so transformed by His divine love, made manifest in her." I hope it is not wrong, dear Saviour, but when I lift my thought to Thee, and in fullness of spirit look into Thy smiling face, close beside Thee stands the loving instrument of my salvation—a noble woman.—By ELEANOR KIRK, in *Zion's Herald*.

 THE BITTEN STRAP.

THE cockpit of a seventy-four gun-ship, some thirty or forty years ago, when the wooden walls of old England were a reality, was in most instances a gloomy, ill-ventilated region; "down three pairs of stairs," as a landsman would have said, below water-mark, and lighted only by the open hatchways overhead or by a tallow candle in a horn lantern, carefully watched over by a sentry. The only fresh air that ever reached the cockpit came through a windsail, a kind of

canvass shaft or pipe, one end of which was open to the breezes above, while the other penetrated to the depths below. On every side were cabins or store-rooms, while the after-part was boarded off as a receptacle for biscuit, and under foot were water-tanks or chain and cordage. The atmosphere was close and unsavory, impregnated with a variety of smells from bilge to mouldy biscuit, to say nothing of turpentine and tar, and such-like nosegays.

The deck overhead was so low that a tall man could scarcely walk upright under it: yet from this were suspended every night the hammocks of some thirty or forty midshipmen or other officers, many of them boys of tender years and of noble family, gaining their first harsh experience of life, and yet as light-hearted and full of merriment as if they had been still in their cricket-fields and playgrounds far away. A good deal of rough play went on sometimes in the cockpit when the hammocks were slung at night; and the slumbers of the youthful crew were frequently disturbed by the practical jokes of their messmates.

No such trifling was to be seen there, however, at the time to which this little history refers; but a much more serious and anxious business. The decks had been cleared for action two days before; all the bulkheads forming the officers' cabins on the several upper decks had been swept away to give free play for the guns; the "sick-bay," or hospital, which had its usual place on the main deck, near the bow-ports, had been transferred below; the midshipmen's chests had been utilised for operating-tables; the swinging lamps from the ward-room and gun-room had been brought down and suspended from the beams above them; the chaplain and all other non-combatants had assembled there to assist the surgeons in their sad but merciful duties. The scene there enacted was of a kind so

painful and distressing that we have no wish to describe it, and should not easily find words to do so if we would. There ~~was~~ no chloroform in those days; and the wounds received in action were not unfrequently the least formidable part of what a seaman had to fear—no *fear* is not the word; say rather, to encounter.

The battle was over now; the wounded had been cared for, and were being nursed almost as tenderly by their messmates as they could have been by so many gentle women. The ship, too, was on her way home to repair damages, with a prize following in her wake; and the crew generally, whether whole or wounded, were in good spirits.

But there were two men, a seaman and a marine, lying in two cots*side by side, a little separated from the rest, who had still before them serious cause for anxiety and apprehension. Both had been badly wounded; and both were waiting to undergo operations which it had been hoped at first might be avoided; but which, at the last visit and consultation of the surgeons, had been pronounced inevitable.

“I wish I had been killed dead on the spot,” said the marine. “I’ve got nobody very particular at home to think of; and it would have made no odds: as well die one time as another. What can a man do when he’s crippled for life?”

“Don’t wish that, Dick,” said the other; you don’t know where you might have been by this time if you had been shot down dead the day before yesterday. A man need not wish to go out of this world in a hurry, unless he’s pretty sure where he’s going to afterwards.”

“Maybe it will come to the same thing after all,” replied the marine. “Many a man has died under the doctor’s hands before now.”

"Keep a good heart, mate; all is in God's keeping. Not a sparrow can fall to the ground without his knowledge. There's time before us now to seek peace with Him at all events. He is a God ready to pardon. He desireth not the death of a sinner. We are all sinners; but we may all be saved through the blessed Christ. Put your trust in Him, Dick, and He'll give you strength to bear what's before you, and bring you well through it; and if not, why you're safe with Him whichever way it goes."

"I wonder to hear you talk," said Dick. "One would not think as you was in the same boat with me; you don't seem to take on much for yourself. You was always a religious-minded man, and I'm bound to listen to what you say: it ain't like some men, who says their prayers when they're going into action, and never at any other time. I have often wished that I could be like you; and so has many another that I know, though they might say different. I'm not afraid to die, as I know on; but *after death*, that's it!"

"That's what we have to look to; and there's forgiveness for us if we ask for it. Think of the thief upon the cross, pardoned just as he was a dying."

"So he was," said the marine; "and you and I are not thieves and robbers, anyhow. I never touched anything that was not my own; thank God for that. No; we're not so bad as he."

"It don't do to reckon that way, mate. 'By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified;' which means, we shan't be saved, Dick, neither of us, for not stealing or for keeping from any particular vice. There's wickedness enough in our lives without stealing. Besides, that thief in the Bible never had any one, belike, to teach him better; so we have got more to answer for than he had.

No; all you've got to do, you and me, is to pray for mercy—mercy!

“Mercy, good Lord, Mercy, I ask,
This is the total sum,
For Mercy, Lord, is all my suit,
Oh, let Thy Mercy come!”

“Christ came into the world to save sinners. Christ died for the ungodly. The great and good God shows his love and readiness to pardon by the gift of Christ. You've heard the text oft, ‘For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’”

There was silence for a few minutes; and soon afterwards the seaman, he who had last spoken, was carried away to the operating-table.

“Give me a bit of a strap or something between my teeth,” he said. “I don't want to make a noise, if I can help it.”

“Don't mind about that,” said one of the assistants. “Call out if it's any relief to you; it will soon be over.”

But he did not call out; only a stifled groan or sob escaped him once or twice. When all was finished, he opened his eyes and looked around him, as if hardly conscious where he was, or what had been the meaning of that terrible ordeal through which he had just passed; then muttered faintly, “Thank God it's over. I didn't call out, did I? I hope that other poor chap didn't hear me. It's his turn now. ‘The Lord have mercy’ on him! God help him!”

A few months later both these men, who, on reaching England, had been transferred from shipboard to hospital, were discharged, and went their several ways as out-pensioners. Dick, the marine, being rallied by some of his former acquaintances on the altered character of his life,

as an earnest-minded and religious man, avoiding public-houses, and attending regularly at the house of God instead, gave the following account of himself :

" Am I a Methody ? You may call me so if you like. Anyhow, I'm a Christian— at least, I hope so. When was I converted, and how ? After a deal of suffering and danger ; hard lines such as I hope you'll never have to pass through. But it wasn't the suffering, it wasn't the danger did it."

" What then ?"

" Why, first and foremost, the grace of God ; and next to that, a bit of a leather strap, as I've got here, with teeth-marks in it. There was preaching to be sure, after I got better ; and the Word of God read out to me, and many a prayer, and a good deal to be learnt and thought of before I could make much way ; but it was the bit of leather strap that set me going. One of the doctor's mates gave it me as I was recovering from this here amputation ; and he told me how the marks come in it ; and how my shipmate, who went through the same trial just before me, thought more of my suffering that was to come than of his own which he was then enduring ; and how, in the time of his greatest agony, he prayed not for himself only, but for me. I always respected that man as a steady, honest, kind-hearted, able seaman before that ; though, as a rule, the marines and blue-jackets don't talk much to one another. But when I came to know what he had done out of his care for me, and when, for weeks together, we lay side by side on the voyage home, and again in hospital, and he talked to me about the love of Christ, who died upon the cross for sinners—the cruellest death that man could suffer, and who would not come down to save Himself when He might have done it, but chose rather to go through with the shame and agony, out of his great love for us, and prayed, too, for his murderers with his dying breath—then

I said, 'Here's doctrine and example, too;' and it went to my heart, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,' and ~~love~~ love is the fulfilling of the law; that was the doctrine of our blessed Saviour: 'As I have loved you, that ye also love one another.'

"This bit of leather with the teeth-marks in it shows how such feelings work in a believer's heart and actions. It's not all talk with a real Christian. Religion that can make a man brave as a lion in his duty, and kind and tender-hearted at the same time towards his mate, patient and contented under the sorest sufferings, and full of faith and earnestness in making known God's goodness for the sake of others, that's something to go by, that is.

"So I thought; and it sank into my heart.. And as Ben and I have been shipmates many a year, I don't doubt but we shall meet again in heaven when this voyage is over, and thank God together for the very pains and sufferings that helped to bring us there. None but a Christian would have shown so much thought and care for his neighbor, in the time of his own trouble, too, as that man showed for me."—*Sunday at Home.*

THE SPECKED APPLE.

MR. Arden had two daughters, Jane and Martha—one twelve years old and the other thirteen—at the time of the incident we are about to relate.

A little girl named Mary, about the age of Martha, also made one of the family of Mr. Arden. She was the orphan child of a friend, and had been received by Mr. Arden when quite young, and treated with all the kindness that marked his conduct toward his own children.

Mr. Arden was a man who understood very well that all the unhappiness in the world had its origin in selfishness, and that the true way to find happiness was to seek the good of others. He often explained this to his children, and taught them that in preferring one another, in little as well as great things, they would feel more real delight than in selfishly looking to their own indulgence.

But this he found a very hard lesson for young minds to learn. Especially hard did it seem for Jane and Martha to prefer Mary in any thing to themselves. They loved her because she was a gentle, sweet-tempered girl, and, therefore, they could not help loving her; but they loved themselves better.

One day, late in the winter, at a time when fruit was scarce, Mr. Arden, on coming from his office, brought home with him three large mellow pippins. They were intended for Jane, Martha, and Mary. While at tea Mr. Arden mentioned the fact that he had three large apples in his coat pocket for the girls.

"O, give me mine," said Jane eagerly.

"Give me mine, papa," said Martha.

But Mary said nothing, although she looked pleased.

"After tea you shall have them," replied Mr. Arden, "but let me tell you there is something about these three apples that will test, to some extent, your characters."

"How can that be, papa?" asked Jane.

"We shall see," replied Mr. Arden, smiling.

"No doubt they will test our love of apples," said Martha, who was a merry little girl.

"Not the least doubt of that in the world," said the father; "but take care, Martha, that in receiving your apple you do not lose your appetite for eating it."

"I shall if it is very sour, or has a poor flavor."

"That you will not find to be the case. They are as fine apples as I have seen for a long time."

"What a mystery papa makes about these apples!" said Jane; "I am really impatient to see them."

"You shall both see and taste them, dear, after tea. But don't forget that there is something about these apples that is going to try your characters."

After they had risen from the tea-table, and the tea things had been cleared away, Mr. Arden brought out his three apples and laid them upon a plate. They were, indeed, tempting to look upon; they were nearly equal in size, but one was less beautiful in shape than the others, and had become "specked," or slightly decayed on one side of the stem. This defect, though small, was quite apparent.

"They are very beautiful," said the mother, taking the plate in her hand and examining the fruit; "I think father has neglected me."

"O, you shall have half of mine," said Mary, quickly.

"And papa shall have half of mine," said Martha.

And to whom, then, shall I give half of mine?" asked Jane. "O, I know; I will divide the half of mine between papa and mamma."

"By which means we shall get the largest share," said Mr. Arden; "so, mother, we shall not only fare as well, but better than the rest."

"And that will be all fair; for you ought to have the largest portion always," said Mary, while her eyes expressed the warm affection that was in her heart for her kind benefactors, who had been to her all that her own father and mother could possibly have been.

"Now Jane," said Mr. Arden, handing toward her the plate which had held the fruit, "take your apple, dear."

Jane, without pausing a moment, took an apple from the plate.

"Here, Martha," and Mr. Arden presented the plate to his youngest daughter, who took, with a smiling lip and a sparkling eye, the large golden apple her kind father had bought her.

"They have left the specked apple for you, Mary," said Mr. Arden, in a slightly disappointed tone. "But, never mind, dear, the ripest and richest fruit is soonest to decay. I have no doubt that the superior flavor of your apple will more than make up for its slight defect."

The two sisters, who perceived in a minute, from their father's remarks, and the tone in which he spoke, that they had acted selfishly in choosing the best apples for themselves, and that he had noticed it, immediately offered to change with Mary, but she said, with a pleasant smile:

"O no, no! I am perfectly satisfied; I should have taken this one, if I had been offered the first choice."

As she said this she took a knife from the table, remarking as she did so, that half of it belonged to Mr. Arden.

While she yet spoke, she pressed the knife into the apple, but something hard toward the center prevented the blade from going through.

A slight pressure broke the apple in halves, and revealed, brightly gleaming in the center, a very elegant little brooch!

"Why papa!" exclaimed Jane, who understood in a minute what was meant.

"Jane, we are justly punished for our selfishness in taking the best apples, and leaving Mary the worst," said Martha, the tears starting to her eyes, even while she made this confession. "These apples, as father said, have indeed tried our characters. But let me look at your beautiful present, Mary."

Martha took the brooch, and while examining it, perceived that there was an inscription on the inside. She read it aloud: "To the least selfish."

"It is yours by right, Mary," said Jane, frankly owning what was daily seen by all to be true, "for you are the least selfish here."

Mary said nothing, but her eyes were full of tears.

"My children," said Mr. Arden, "this is a little matter, but it has shown you something of yourselves. I am rejoiced to find that Jane and Martha bear their disappointment in such a generous spirit, for it tells me that the lesson has done them good."—*Children's Guest.*

PRESENCE OF MIND.

WHEN Henry Rogers was remarking to a Scotch lady how desirable it is, in danger, to have presence of mind,—“I had rather,” said she, “have absence of body!” But absence of body dictated by quick foresight, is often itself an evidence of presence of mind.

Absence of body, however, is not always attainable. Dangers will start up unexpectedly—perilous or awkward predicaments will occur—and then comes the test of that presence or readiness of mind which averts danger, even though the body cannot be absent.

I remember, some years ago, the case of a poor woman near Moffat, who, when carrying home some “meal-pocks,” had occasion to cross a field in which there was a wild bull. Suddenly the bull made its appearance. The woman ran for the dyke, the bull after her. The dyke was a good way off, and the bull was making up fast. Suddenly she tripped and fell. The monster was close upon her.

Quick as lightning the woman tore open one of the "pocks" and threw a handful of the meal into the brute's eyes just as he was lowering his horns to toss her. The bull was blinded for the time, and plunged madly about unable to see her. The woman picked up her "meal-pocks" and ran, just as a game-keeper made his appearance coming to the rescue. The presence of mind in this case consisted in the woman's instant perception and execution of the best method of defense that deliberation could have suggested. People often say, when a thing is over, "If I had only thought of doing so and so," but presence of mind thinks of it.

Dr. John Brown tells of a lady who was sitting on a lawn with her children around her when a mad dog appeared running towards them pursued by some peasants. Without presence of mind the lady would either have shrieked and fled or else flung herself upon the dog, and in seeking to save the children sacrificed herself. Her presence of mind, however, instantly suggested the best thing to be done. She sprang to her feet, ran forward to meet the rabid brute, received its head in her thick stuff gown between her knees, and muffling it up held it with all her might till the men came up.

Another case, in which a man had steadiness of mind to do in a sudden emergency just what people considering it calmly afterwards would say was wisest, occurred at a farm near Exeter. The farmer (Mr. Blight) observing a swarm of bees, tried to attract them by waving a leafy branch which he had torn from a bush. They came, but instead of pitching on it they suddenly began to gather on the man's head, face, neck, and hands. Instead of yielding to the impulse there must have been wildly to plunge about and try to get the swarm off—an effort which would have ended in his being stung to death—the man, the

moment he saw they were settling on him, cried to his friends to bring a hive, and then stood perfectly still, though the bees were soon swarming inches deep all over his head and neck. A hive was brought and held in position, the bees swarmed away into it, and the man escaped without a single sting.

Another instance was that of a lady who, on retiring to her room at night, discovered from some indications that there must be a robber concealed under the bed. There was no one else in the house except a young servant-girl, and the lady knew that if she attempted to raise an alarm, the man could master and might possibly murder them both. Accordingly, with great presence of mind, she repressed her terror and moved to and fro in the room for a little time as if beginning to undress. Then, as if she had suddenly remembered something, she said aloud, "Forgotten that key again, I declare!" and left the room as if to fetch it, leaving the door open and the gas burning. She went down stairs, softly awoke the servant-girl, sent her out for the police, and had the man captured where he lay. In such cases the presence of mind consists in retaining, in a moment of sudden excitement and peril, the same sagacity that others are only able to exercise when circumstances are favorable to calm deliberation.

A very remarkable, and at the same time fearful instance of this kind of self-possession is given by Goldwin Smith in his "Irish History and Character." A party of White-boys forced their way on bloody errand into the house of a man whose wife and child were in the house with him. The ruffians seized the man and dragged him down stairs to murder him; and the woman knew that her turn would come next. There was a closet in the room with a little hole in the door which a person placed inside could peep

through. The woman with the swiftness of thought concealed the little girl in the closet, and said to her, “

“They are murdering your father down stairs, ~~and~~ when they have done they will come up and murder me. While they are at it, watch them, and see you are able to swear to them when you see them in court. I will throw turf on the fire to give you light and will struggle as long as I can that you may have a good view.”

Scarcely had she got the fire into a blaze when the ruffians, having murdered her husband, dashed into the room and sprang upon her. The girl, who evidently inherited her mother's spirit, watched them well while her mother was being despatched. She identified them afterwards in a court of justice, and on her evidence they were convicted.

In dealing with madmen there is required, and there has often been shown, a rare presence of mind that includes a certain ingenuity calculated to turn the flank of the wild purpose that sometimes takes possession of the madman's brain. When Sir Thomas More was Lord Chancellor of England, and turning frail with age, he was accustomed, when at his country house at Chelsea, to go out and sit in a kind of summer-house that overhung the river. On one occasion, when sitting there with a little dog on his knee, he was startled by the irruption of a madman who had managed to clamber over the wall from the adjoining grounds of Bedlam and came in by the side gate.

“Ha, ha!” cried the man with a maniac laugh, “come along, leap—leap into the river!” and he pointed over the battlement.

The Chancellor saw in a moment that the madman, if he resisted, would hurl him over. So, as if entering heartily into the madman's thought, he cried:

“Good! let us throw the dog first and see what he'll

do," and, taking the little terrier by the neck, he flung it into the water.

"Ha, ha! look at him!" he cried jovially, slapping the madman on the shoulder. "Run, run! fetch him up and we'll try that once more."

The maniac, carried away with the thought, ran out by the side gate and scrambled hastily down to catch the dog, whereupon the Chancellor turned the lock and retired to his house. But ever after he kept that gate barred.

I remember another case of a warder in a lunatic asylum who was caught at an open window in the third story by one of the mad inmates. This man laid his powerful grasp on the warder's shoulders, and said, "Look, I want to see you jump down there!"

The warder, taking the thing quite coolly, exclaimed, "Jump down? Anybody could jump down. But would you like to see me jump up? Just you watch?"

The maniac, with a look of delighted surprise, removed his hand and leaned over to watch for the warder's appearance below; but it is needless to say that within two minutes half a dozen warders were upon him and had him conveyed to his room.

Presence of mind is often as conspicuous in averting embarrassment as in averting danger. When Charles Reade's dramatization of Tennyson's "Dora" was being enacted in Prairie City where the choice of actors was not great, "Mary Morrison," on making her exit to bring on her little Willie of four years, was shocked to find a lubberly boy of at least fourteen who *must* go on, as no other was to be had. The farmer Allen of the play was no doubt equally shocked to see Mary coming upon the stage with a boy nearly as big as herself. What was worse, the audience began to titter. But farmer Allen was equal to the emergency: and instead of asking "How old are you

my little boy?" said, "How old are you, my strapping fellow?" probably hoping that the boy would have the good sense to give an age more suitable to his size.

The boy, however, with painful fidelity to the book, and in a sepulchral voice that made the answer all the more preposterous, replied, "Four to five, grandpapa."

"Forty-five!" exclaimed the other, cheerfully. "You look it my boy, you look it."

There was a laugh at the moment, but the play was saved from shipwreck.

It is told of a famous tragedian that at the close of an act in which he had been the prominent character, a goose's head was thrown upon the stage by some one who had a spite against him. The tragedian picked it up, handed it to one of the others to take away, and said with perfect nonchalance, "The gentleman who has thrown his head upon the stage can get it back at the close of the performance."

Mr. Beecher enjoys the reputation on this side of the Atlantic of being a man with much of this presence of mind; able where other speakers would be put out not only to preserve his composure, but to send an interruption recoiling with tenfold force upon the man who makes it. I give the following incident just as I heard it told. On one occasion, in the midst of an impassioned speech, some one to whom Beecher's views were distasteful attempted to interrupt him (as has been done with others) by suddenly crowing like a cock. The cry was done to perfection: a number of people laughed in spite of themselves; and Beecher's friends felt that in a moment the whole effect of the meeting, and of Beecher's thrilling appeal, might collapse. Beecher, however, was fully equal to the occasion. He stopped, listened till the crowing ceased, and then with a look of surprise pulled out his watch.

"Morning already!" he said, "My watch is only at ten. But there is no mistake about it. The instincts of the lower animals are infallible."

There was a roar of laughter, the lower animal in the gallery collapsed, and Beecher was able to resume as if nothing had occurred.

Presence of mind is often more acquired than natural. But frequently what seems a growing acquisition of this power is simply a growing familiarity with the kind of embarrassments or dangers that at first throw the mind into confusion. With most men, recurring embarrassments become less embarrassing; and at last the mind is left free to exercise its native sagacity without being, even for an instant, disturbed.—*Christian Union*.

STARTING AFRESH.

"I'VE come again, Aunt Sophy," said Alice Maynard, as she sauntered into the room where a grave, elderly woman sat at her sewing. Mrs. May was "Aunt Sophy" to every body in the neighborhood. Her great motherly heart held a larger parcel of young folks' confidences than that of any other woman in town. The visitor helped herself to a chair by her kind friend's side with the air of assured welcome.

"Of course, you've come again, Allie."

"And with a special request of you this time, Aunt Sophy. This is my birthday. I'm twenty years old to-day."

"Twenty years! oh, how the time does go!"

"It don't seem as old as it looked four years ago. I feel just as young as ever. But life has a different aspect after all. I don't feel so careless. I want to be, Aunt

Sophy—oh, I want to be a good woman, a better woman than I ever used to think of. And I've come to talk with you about it; may be you can say something good to help me; and I want your blessing. That would certainly give me a lift towards goodness."

"My blessing, dear child! why you have that all the time!"

"But I want something in particular to-day; it is a solemn sort of day to me, in spite of the presents, and the kisses, and all the good wishes. There's always any amount of advice to young people, but I don't see exactly how it is to get me prepared for the future, the solemn duties of life, as the preachers and writers are wont to say."

"Do you want I should tell you what is the very best preparation for the duties of to-morrow, near or far?"

"Oh, yes, Aunt Sophy, do!"

"Well, it is simply to do promptly and faithfully the duties of to-day. If I could inspire you with that one idea, Alice, it would be a rich blessing to your birthday."

"I thought, aunty, you would offer a great, strong prayer for me, and God would hear it, and I should be blessed."

"And so I will, dear, ask for you in earnest prayer a very great blessing. It shall be this: that you may have the disposition to be diligent, to be punctual, to be thorough in everything that belongs to you to do. And then you must yourself answer my prayer for blessing by becoming diligent, and punctual, and thorough every day. A birthday is a good time to turn over a new leaf, and get a new blessing. Praying and doing, you know, must go together. God wouldn't mind much about our prayers for preparation and special blessing if we didn't rouse ourselves up to grasp the blessing with our own hand. Praying

that does not take hold of doing is either hypocritical or sentimental; neither one nor the other makes a woman much better."

"I'm afraid my duties don't amount to much, Aunt Sophy."

"Then, dear, I suspect it's because you don't take hold of them rightly. Let's see; you get up in the morning, of course. I wonder if it's always promptly, so nobody is hindered or tripped with your tardiness? And if you go at once about the care of your room, or the breakfast, or of the children, no matter what, anything you have to do?"

"O, aunty, mother has been telling of me, I know she has."

"No, indeed; you've been reporting yourself to me, little by little, these two years. And so I am master of my opportunity to offer a very great blessing. I've been to your home, too, a good many times. What was that you were saying the other day about your sewing getting behindhand, and about falling back in practicing? And especially about the hooks and buttons that tore off so much, as if they were never properly sewed on? Seems to me you confessed to reading more novels than anything else, and to forgetting, for lack of review, the science and the history it cost so much to learn at school. On the whole, if you were to sit to Miss Ophelia for a daily picture, I'm afraid that woman would label you with her terrible 'shiftless.'"

Alice began to cry. "O Aunt Sophy, do show a little mercy! Why, you are as bad as my mother when she gets out of patience!"

"Cry away, child; you know I mean only love by talking so. Such tears are what Mrs. Browning would call 'salt and bitter and good.' I'm sorry for mother, and

sorry for you, and so I deliver my blessing to you, even as the Lord sent you here to receive it."

"It's all right, I know, Aunt Sophy, and true, and I ought to thank you, I suppose. But I didn't think of being blessed in this way by confronting my faults."

"You thought I would try some loving, tender words, and pray for some spiritual blessing; and then you would feel so sweet and happy, and in some mysterious, spiritual way you would be made better by it. You would go home and be very nice and kind to everybody for a little while, and you would do some things extra, that happened to please you to do; and then when the transient impression had worn off you would be just as before. But you may be sure that is not the way God gives blessing. His blessing for birthdays is a new inspiration that doesn't die out through the year. It holds on day after day until another anniversary comes round and then it starts afresh. His blessing is vigorous self-discipline; it is putting one's hand right into the duty—no matter what it is—that belongs to the moment, and compelling one's self to be thorough in it. His blessing is hard work for other people as well as for self. His blessing is being patient with slack and disagreeable folks while you are prompt and well behaved yourself. A new resolution in God's strength to begin at once and be this, and do this, is God's blessing on your twentieth birthday. This is what makes a woman good, better, best."

Alice was crying heartily by this time, and tears were dropping on Aunt Sophy's folded work.

"Now let's go aside, dear, and lay the case before your Father and mine."

They knelt down together, the gray haired matron tenderly clasping the youthful hand.

"Shall I ask Him for this blessing, darling, this that can come only by your own earnest, persistent will in every-day doing and every-day prayer?"

Slowly and carefully Alice replied :

"Yes, Aunt Sophy, even this ; I've felt for a long time that I must turn over this new leaf, and I need, you know I am so slack and careless, all you can ask God for to keep me to the resolution. Ask Him for His inspiration, His strength."

It was a precious season for both ; to Alice it was the golden opportunity to begin a new year by a renewed life. This twentieth birthday has but just passed. We shall see in another twelve months what comes of a true resolve in a sacred hour.

Again and again in our lives 'God takes us by the hand,' as the old Moravian hymn sings, and says, 'Start afresh.'—*Advocate and Guardian*.

ADMIRAL HOPE'S REPROOF.



ADMIRAL Hope's Christian firmness in rebuking swearing and improper language when uttered in his presence is familiar to many. Not many years back a gentleman in a London omnibus was using very violent language, swearing and taking the name of Christ in vain, when he was quickly rebuked and requested to desist by an elderly gentleman sitting opposite. The first-named having resented the interference, the old officer added, "Well, sir, I am extremely sorry you resent my words simply requesting you to forbear insulting a very dear and precious name which I honor and love ; and I can only say that if you are dead to all feeling or consideration of common courtesy, and will persist in using the

language you have done, you compel me to do that which I shall be very sorry to be obliged to do."

Upon this the angry man broke out afresh and defied him, when the Admiral stopped the omnibus and got out. The other watched him, expecting he would call a policeman; but seeing him walk quietly away, he remarked to another passenger about his impertinence, when the person whom he addressed asked if he knew who it was that had been induced to remonstrate with him. He replied, "No; nor do I care, except that he was very impertinent for threatening me in that way." The other remarked that he was mistaken, for there had been no threat but a meek and courteous remonstrance; that the man was a most kind and benevolent man and a gallant officer, who was quite incapable of any mean act.

"What right had he to threaten me? Did he not say he would do something if I did not desist?"

"Yes," replied the gentleman; "but that was no idle threat, and he did what he said he would be obliged to do."

"And what was that?" asked the angry man.

"Why, get out and walk, which his age and infirmities would hardly allow him to do, for he spends a great part of his income in succoring the afflicted and the destitute, and he would not like to throw away even a sixpence."

"You don't mean to say that was what he meant?" asked the angry man. "What is his name?"

"I am quite positive it was all he meant," replied the other; "And his name is Admiral Hope—a true-hearted Christian man."

The angry man looked puzzled, then thoughtful, and at last cried out, "God forgive me! What a fool I have been! Give me his address, in case I should miss him." He stopped the omnibus and jumped out to seek his faith-

ful reprover, adding that he hoped it would make a new man of him, for he never should forget the lesson to the last day of his life. This anecdote was related by the gentleman himself, who became a humble follower of the Lord Jesus, but who has since gone to his rest, trusting only in that blessed Name which he had so blasphemed and lightly spoken of.



WITNESSING FOR JESUS.



A middle-aged unhappy-looking man was walking down the busy streets of a large town one summer's evening, deep in thought, "seeming scarcely to notice many who passed him by, only scarcely recognising a few who touched their hats to him; and he did not even cast a glance at the little, ragged shoeblack who brightened up as he said to his companion, "That's he as giv' me a shillin' t'other day when I held his hoss for 'um," hoping that some day another shilling might be forthcoming. Tall and commanding in appearance he was, but little did the multitude know what an aching heart he carried under that elegant suit of clothes. He, Mr. L, had wealth, position, influence, but for forty-five years he had lived without Christ; and now that God had seen fit to take from him the wife whom he loved and had made an idol of, and left him without a child to love, he felt the want of Christ.

He passed on through the crowd, and presently he turned down one of the narrow alleys; and there he suddenly halted, and stood looking in astonishment at a group of dirty, wretched-looking women, some knitting, others with babies on their laps, and more sitting idle round the doorstep of a little low cottage apart from the other houses, all

listening to an old woman with wrinkled cheeks, and hair almost as white as snow, who, with an old Bible in her hand, stood in the doorway reading and talking to them.

Ashamed to stand and listen to what he scoffed at in his heart, Mr. L. passed on, but not before he heard her voice say in feeble accents, "Yes, it is all true; and our blessed Jesus says to you, 'Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.'" The words rang in his ear. "Rest!" he exclaimed to himself; "who can give me rest? and yet I am weary of my life." Before he left the alley he turned round and looked towards the cottage; but the old face had disappeared, and the women were dispersing. *

He could not get any rest that night; and long after his servants had retired he was pacing up and down his chamber, and saying aloud, "How am I to find rest?"

Two evenings later he stood tapping at the cottage door. "Come in," said a pleasant voice. He entered, and "Old Sally," as the people called her, sat at the table eating her evening meal, which was a crust of bread and a cup of tea. Her face brightened as she recognised her visitor.

"Why, you are the very gentleman I have been praying about."

"Praying about! how came you to pray about me?"

"If you will be so good as to sit down, sir, I will tell you," she said, dusting the chair she placed for him.

Mr. L. smiled scornfully as he complied with her request.

"The reason I prayed about you, sir, was because I saw you pass this door the other evening, and I thought I never saw a man look so unhappy; and so, when I got alone, I said, 'Lord Jesus, say a word of comfort to that stranger, if he has got an aching heart.' My idea is that those men and women who have got Jesus and a home in

heaven can't help being happy, if all the world is against them ; so when I see a miserable face I conclude there is something wrong somewhere."

"Suppose I tell you I don't want Christ?" he said, unaffected by what he had heard.

"Then I should not believe you, sir."

"At any rate, I want to hear about that rest you were speaking of the other night."

Old Sally looked up; the misery—almost despair—she saw written on the proud stranger's face, with the sadness of his tone, went to her heart. Pushing aside her cup of tea and leaning forward, she said with animation, "Have you lived all these years in the world, sir, and not seen Jesus?"

"Yes."

"Haven't you wanted Him, sir?"

"No, woman! what have I to do with Jesus?"

"You must have something to do with Him, or you will never find rest, sir. It is not to be had without."

"Who is to believe that?" he asked.

"I believe it, and because He has told me it is so; and if you pardon the liberty, I will just read a verse or two out of my Bible, and then you will hear it too."

"I know the Bible as well as you do."

"Excuse me, sir; but that's no way possible if you do not know Jesus. I am an ignorant old woman and you may be a learned man: but I have had the blessed Lord Himself to explain it to me, and no one can understand it unless He teaches them. Its truths are 'hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes.'"

"If I have God, why should I want Christ?"

"Because you can't get to heaven without him, sir. Don't speak against Jesus! I can't bear it. He is every-

thing to me, and perhaps He has sent you to a poor old woman to hear a word of His precious truth."

"I want rest, for I am weary and tired of life."

"Bless God for that! You can have it, sir. It's to be had in Christ by going to Christ, and by living near Him. No one on earth can have happiness without. I'm glad you have come here, sir, because I know I have got a word which will comfort you. My highest and richest happiness in life is to speak a word for my blessed Master, and to witness for Him whenever I can. You will let me read to you, sir?"

He made no answer; but old Sally augured good from his silence, and, putting on her spectacles, she closed her eyes for a moment, and breathed a silent prayer for help. Then she began reading, in her low, sweet voice, passage after passage—reading it as though she were delivering a message from Jesus Himself to the poor sinner sitting in her home, until the strong man was so overcome that he covered his face with his hands to hide the tears which would force themselves down his cheeks; indeed, he was so overpowered with a sense of his own unworthiness, God's wondrous goodness, and the old woman's rich, full happiness, that putting a bright half sovereign into her hand, he left the room, saying only, "Thank you, Sally. I will come again."

Away to his mansion he went to struggle alone with his God—to free himself from the clutches of the evil one, who met him there to tell him that it was humiliating to weep and pray to an offended God, and to whisper to the poor sinner a hundred other blasphemous things to tempt him to doubt the Divinity and efficacy of Christ. Mr. L. listened, and pride kept him back from believing himself *nothing*, and Christ *everything*.

For two days he did not go to the cottage, unwilling that another should know his misery and despair, and per-

haps too proud to ask instruction from a poor old woman. However, on the evening of the third day, a message came to him. "Old Sally is dying, and she would like to see Mr. L." He went immediately.

Dying! was that death? so serene, so calm—a heavenly light radiating those withered cheeks, and not a soul with her to comfort her.

"Have you found Jesus, sir?" were her first words.

"Oh no, Sally. Are you really dying?" he asked mechanically.

"Yes; my hours are numbered, and I long to 'depart and be with Christ:' but I should go happier if I knew you had found the Lord, sir. There is room in heaven for all, and old Sally would like to see all her friends there to hear what her blessed Jesus has to say to them."

"It is hopeless, my good woman, I have been too long away from God."

"No, no, sir, the devil says that; kneel down, and let a dying woman say a word of prayer."

Mr. L knelt down by the bedside, and in broken utterance, soft and plaintive, prayed such a prayer as he had never heard before. Angels heard its whisper in heaven, and, as she continued, the Lord Himself came near to the man who had despised Him, who scoffed and ridiculed Him, and hearing the low cry of penitence from a humbled heart, he said, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee;" and when the dying woman ceased praying from sheer exhaustion, and let her hands drop down from her side, Mr. L. said, "Praise God, Sally! I have found Christ." With what joy the pardoned man rose and thanked his benefactor!

"Don't thank me, sir. Thank Jesus."

"I will, Sally. What can I do for you? Ask anything."

"Witness for Jesus, sir. 'Follow ~~us~~ me, and bring others with you to heaven.'" And without a moment's hesitation, Mr. L. said, in a voice of deep emotion, "God helping me, I will."

Then there was a gentle tap at the door, and one voice said, "May we come, Sally?" and she answered, "Yes, come in, my sisters. I have a word for you too."

Then grasping her hand with a "God bless you," Mr. L. hurried from the room. He did not see her again; but through eternity he will praise God for directing him to old Sally.

The following morning he heard that Sally had gone home to be with Jesus. He followed her to the grave, and when the others had gone, he stood alone in that quiet churchyard by the newly-covered grave, and prayed for power and strength to live and witness for Christ.

GABRIEL GRUMBLE'S DREAM.

I have a neighbor whose Christian name is Gabriel. His other name I need not mention, for he is never called by it. He is such an incessant whiner and fault-finder that he is known all over town as Gabriel Grumble. A few days ago he came into my shop with a long face, and said: "Neighbor, do you believe in dreams?" "Not much," I replied; "but why do you ask?" "I have had two very curious dreams, and I don't know what to make of them." "Well, tell me, and I will try to be your Daniel." After some hesitation, he began: "You know, neighbor, that I have been an unlucky man, and often wonder why other people get along so much better than I do; and everybody calls me a grumbler. Well, the other evening I was thinking, as I often do, how rich

some of my neighbors are while I am poor; how many of them live in fine houses while I live in a hovel; how they prosper in business and I never could succeed in anything. I went to bed in a very unhappy mood. I fell into a troubled sleep, and dreamed this dream: An angel seemed to stand at my bedside and say: 'Gabriel, your grumbling is heard, and the Lord has taken pity on you. He will let you change places with any of your neighbors whom you consider more fortunate than yourself. But you must take his place in all particulars. You cannot have his property or position and be yourself. You must be just what he is in form, features, habit, tastes, family, friends, everything. You shall have twenty-four hours to decide in, and during that time you shall be able to look into the hearts of your neighbors, and see just how happy their worldly prospect makes them.' And then he vanished. When I woke up in the morning I recalled that dream. It came to me like something that had really happened. I couldn't get it out of my mind. In spite of myself I kept thinking about my neighbors; and as I thought about them I seemed to have them before me and to be able to look right through them. So I began to examine them, one by one, to determine which I would prefer to change places with. Neighbor A was the first one in my mind's eye, because he is the richest. I thought it would be nice to have his money; but when I thought of his wife, what a torment she is, what a dog's life she leads him; when I saw his heart, how sore it was; when I learned that he rushed into business only that he might drown for a time the memory of his domestic sorrows, I didn't want to be him. I could not envy him. I pitied him as I would a slave that is scourged to his tasks. Next came neighbor B. But with him came that son of his who is the hy-word and term of the town—that wretched, reckless boy who

will no doubt be guilty of some crime that will bring him to the gallows, and his father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. As I looked into B's. heart and saw the grief and dread that tortured it day and night, I thanked God for my boys, and wouldn't change them for his if a million dollars were thrown into the bargain. Neighbor C. came next. He has a pleasant wife and pretty children. Yet you know that he never seems to be happy. Well, that day I found out why. I looked into his heart, and there I saw a serpent coiled up, that was biting and stinging all the time. I knew that serpent was avarice; that it never lets the man in whose heart it nestles enjoy what he has, no matter how much, but keeps goading him to try to get more. I wouldn't have that snake in my heart for the wealth of the Rothschilds. Neighbor D. was the next that came before my mind's eye. You know how he got rich very fast during the war, and hard stories are whispered about as to the way he made his money. People bow to him politely, but as soon as his back is turned, one says to another—'cheated the government,' 'sent shoddy blankets to the poor soldiers.' I saw that his heart was as rotten as the cloth he used to manufacture, and I determined that I wouldn't be him at any price. Well, to make a long story short, I thought of all my rich neighbors, one by one, but something was the matter with each one of them—something that when put into the scale against their money, outweighed it. I came at last to those in moderate circumstances, and fixed upon neighbor Z. as the one I would be willing to change places with. He has a nice house, a nice family, a good business; everybody likes him and calls him an honest man. 'Yes,' I said to myself, 'he will do.' But I looked again, and lo! that big nose and those squinting eyes of his. The nose never seemed so big, or the eyes so crossed and askew as

when I thought of taking them. How could I, who have always been regarded as a handsome fellow, O! how could I hold up my head with such a nose upon it, or look at my friends with such distorted orbs of vision? But I thought perhaps the angel, if he comes, will not insist upon such matters. At any rate I will ask him. Well, that night I dreamed again; the angel came as before, and standing by my bed, asked: 'Have you decided whom you will change places with?' 'Yes,' I replied; 'I will change places with Mr. Z. if you will let me keep my own nose and eyes.' 'Nay, nay, that cannot be. They are the crook in his lot, and if you would have the lot, you must take the crook with it. Remember the terms: if you change, it must be in every particular. You must become just as he is, and he just what you are.' 'Then I won't do it,' I cried, starting up in bed; 'I wouldn't have his features at any price.' 'And isn't there some one else that you would like to be?' said the angel. 'No, I have thought over all my neighbors, and I would rather be myself, poor as I am, than any of them.' 'Then you had better stop grumbling,' he said, and vanished. What do you think of these dreams?" "Think of them," I said, "why, their meaning is as easy to see as Mr. Z's nose. They are just such dreams as you ought to dream, and I hope that they will do you a great deal of good."

If you have any grumblers among your acquaintances, just ask them to find somebody that they would be willing to change places with, or else to quit the meanest business that a man or woman can engage in.—By **HIRAM HELLTOP**,
in the Interior.

THE ORCHARD BLESSING.

GRANDFATHER M—drove into town one day with a load of apples. But the market was overfull, and he could not sell them. There were enough and to spare in the cellar at home, for God had given him a bountiful harvest. All at once he thought of a poor Scotch woman, who supported herself and four fatherless children by reseating cane-chairs, and he resolved to take the apples to her.

“It did me more good to see her joy and that of her children, than to have sold the apples,” said grandfather, when he came home, very much pleased with the day’s transaction.

Every fall after that she was bid to come and gather a wagon-load for her winter’s stock. It was a grand excursion to the children, and they enjoyed their substantial farm dinner as only such poor children could. As she went away she always took grandfather by the hand, and expressed her thanks, ending with: “May the Lord bless you, and may you always have a good apple-crop.”

Those apples, with bread, were often the sole food of the children; but they were content and thankful, and never went hungry all the winter. Their mother’s faith in the widow’s God never faltered, and he never deserted them.

When grandfather lay for seven years on a sick-bed, the poor Scotch woman’s blessing was a pleasant thing to remember, and he had many more such memories to make his pillow soft and his days less weary.

The woman has moved away, but her blessing stays still.

“How is it,” said a neighbor, “that your apple trees always bear, whether others’ do or not?”

"It is the old Scotch woman's blessing," was the answer.

There are many other orchards that might be brought into better bearing condition by a similar system. If the Lord's tithe was more carefully set aside, there would be fewer "bad years" with our farmer friends.—*American Messenger*.

A BRAVE BOY'S ADVENTURE.

WE were leisurely sitting and chatting at the dinner table, in that quiet old farm house where we were sojourning not many weeks ago, when suddenly there burst upon our ears distant sounds, at first like the merry hallooing and shouting of children at play. A moment's suspense, the racket and clatter increasing, and then, what was our horror and consternation as we saw a powerful horse, attached to a lumber wagon, tearing down the lane on three legs, at the same time kicking furiously with the fourth, which was suspended over the dash-board. In the wagon were two mites of boys. The smaller one, without the utterance of a sound or the movement of a muscle, was clinging to the seat, a picture of cool intrepidity, while the other, clutching the reins with a firm hand, was shrieking as the kicks of the infuriated animal fell upon him, "Whoa! whoa! whoa—oh—oh!" We one and all rushed out, wildly hoping that we might do something,—anything towards rescuing these dear little children from such imminent deadly peril. At this precise juncture, however, the frightened horse succeeded in some violent way in extricating his imprisoned foot. Once more upon all fours, he seemed forthwith to recover his equine senses, and immediately brought up in the most staid and

respectable manner at the gate just opposite, instead of holding on his course, and plunging down the hill at his left, at the very brink of which he had halted.

The singular runaway coming to so abrupt and happy a termination, the little ones were at once taken in charge, and all kind ministrations rendered them in their sorry plight and sore need. Six year old Bertie, pallid with terror and eyes like small moons, from whom throughout not a sound or whimper had been heard, had escaped without a scratch, or so much even as the ruffling of a single curl on his sunny little head. Not so with his brother Freddie, two years elder, the little hero who, despite appalling danger, had, with the spirit of the true horseman, held to his reins up to the latest moment. He, poor child, with bruised and battered shins, the result of the kicks received from the horse, was frantic with pain. The injuries, fortunately, were not serious, but for a few minutes Freddie screamed as vociferously as can well be imagined, rather naturally thinking, under the circumstances, he was pretty nearly killed. Soothing up at last, though yet with a good many sobs, he proceeded to give us the history of the runaway as follows:—

"Parson," said he (a name which the horse had received, doubtless, in consideration of his uniformly exemplary conduct), "never tried to run away before in all his life. But this time he couldn't help it, anyway, for coming down the long hill the harness broke, then the wagon pitched forward and hit him every step, then he began to kick awfully, and got his foot caught, and then he ran away on three legs as hard as ever he could over the bridge and all. But," he continued with manifest pride, "I bet you I just held on tight, and reined him into the lane, when he got his foot loose and stopped just as you all came running out."

Wishing to draw out the little fellow a trifle further, we said : "But didn't you think, Freddie, that you would drop the lines and jump out, when the kicks from old Parson hurt you so?" He replied in a manner so emphatic that we felt reproved for a question that should imply even a suspicion of cowardice. "Oh! no, ma'am! no, ma'am! I couldn't leave *him* you know," (nodding with glistening eyes toward Bertie,) "I wouldn't have jumped out for *any* thing!"

The answer had the true ring to it. This little lad was a hero of the right stamp. Brave and manly, and a great heart of love for his brother, whom nothing could tempt to cowardly forsake when in danger.

This incident that we have related is true in every particular, and now, in conclusion, if there are any little boys, or any big boys to be found, or any horse, that altogether can more splendidly execute a *three legged runaway*, we shall be happy to hear from them.—By M. T. M'C., in the *Troy Daily Times*.

THE MODERATE DRINKER.



so-called moderate drinker was once very angry with a friend who claimed that safety is alone in totally abstaining from the use of ardent spirits, and who allowed his fanatical notions to insinuate that the moderate drinker himself might then be beyond self-control. "To make plain the question who is wrong," said the man, "will you just quit one month, not touching a drop during the time?" Said the other: "To satisfy your mind, sir, I will with pleasure, though I know myself; I will do as you ask to cure overwrought ideas." He kept the promise; but at the end of the month he came to his

friend with tears in his eyes, and thanked him for saving him from a drunkard's grave. Said he: "I never knew before that I was in any sense a slave to drink, but the last month has been the fiercest battle of my life. I see now I was almost beyond hope; and had the test come many months later, it would have been too late for me. But I have kept the pledge, and by God's help I will keep it for life." Moderate drinker, just try it for one year, and see how near you are to the rapids, beyond which there is no returning.



"GOD HAS A PLAN FOR EVERY MAN."



soldier's widow lived in a little hut near a mountain village in the Austrian Tyrol. Her only child, Hans, was a cripple, a good, kind-hearted boy. He loved his mother fondly, and longed to help her in her poverty; but what could a poor lame boy do, who had not strength enough to join the village boys in their play? When he was fifteen years of age it made him sad to think that he was a burden to his mother instead of being a help.

At this time Napoleon Bonaparte, with a French army, was trying to conquer the Tyrolese and get possession of their country. But they were brave; they loved their country, and resolved to defend it to the last. It was easy to do this if they knew when their enemies were coming; for there were many narrow passes in the mountains where a few men could keep back an army.

An arrangement was made by the inhabitants whereby they could give notice to one another when their enemies were coming. This was by signal fires. At different points among the mountains great heaps of dry materials were piled up, ready to be lighted in a moment; and then

the signal fires would leap up, till every village and mountain top would seem to be in a blaze.

The village in which Hans and his mother lived lay right on the road which the French army would take in marching over the mountains, and the people were all busy getting ready for the fight. Hans and his mother had nothing to do but wait. "Ah! Hans," she said to him one evening, "it's well that you are lame, or else they would make a soldier of you, and take you away from me." This made Hans feel very sad. The tears flowed down his cheeks. "Mother," said he, "I'm of no use. Look through our village. Everybody is busy doing something to protect home and country. But I can do nothing; I am useless."

"My boy! you are not useless to me."

"Yes, mother, even to you. I can't work for you. I can't support you in your old age. Why, O, why was I born?"

"Hush, Hans, my dear; don't talk so," said his mother.

"You will live to find the truth of our old proverb—

'God has his plan
For every man.'

Soon after this the holidays came on. The people of the village were all busy with the festival, and fun and frolic and merry games engaged them all except Hans. At the close of the day he offered his evening prayer, in which he asked God, as he was accustomed to do, to make him of some use in the world. Then he went to bed and slept.

At midnight he awoke with the thought in his mind that the French army was coming. He tried to put away the thought, but it would return; so he got up and dressed himself, and at once walked up the mountain path. He kept on till he reached the signal pile. To

his surprise the men who should have been watching by it had left to share in the festivities! Near the pile was an old pine-tree. In a hollow place in the trunk of the tree was a tinder-box and tinder for kindling the pile. As Hans was standing by the old tree a strange sound fell upon his ears; he listened attentively; again he heard it—it was the sound of approaching footsteps. He looked steadily in the direction from which the sound came. Presently, in the dim moonlight, he saw soldiers climbing up the cliff. In a second he knew what it meant. The French army was coming, and these soldiers were sent in advance to destroy the signal pile, so that the country could not be aroused. Quick as thought Hans struck a light, kindled the turpentine brand, and threw it blazing upon the pile. Instantly the flame leaped up. The signal was given. Quickly it was answered from mountain top to mountain top. Signal fires were blazing everywhere. The people were roused. The French army was driven back. The country was saved.

As Hans, the hero, watched by the burning pile, a retreating soldier fired at him. The shot struck him on the shoulder. It was a severe wound, yet he managed to get back to the village. By this time the villagers all knew who had kindled the signal fire. They gathered round him crying, "Hurrah! hurrah for Hans!" They were going to carry him on their shoulders through the village, but when they saw he was wounded they paused in sorrow. "Carry me to my mother," he faintly said.

When his mother saw the blood flowing from his wound she burst into tears. "Don't cry for me now, dear mother, I die happy. It is true as you said—

'God has his plan
For every man,'—

though I didn't know what it was till now."

Hans died from his wound ; but he was happy in dying, for he had saved his country and provided for his mother, who was well taken care of by the Government for her son's faithfulness to the land.

A GOOD HAMMER.

TWENTY-NINE years ago, when David Maydole was a roadside blacksmith at Norwich, New York, six carpenters came to the village from the next county to work upon a new church, one of whom, having left his hammer behind, came to the blacksmith's to get one made, their being none in the village store.

"Make me a good one," said the carpenter—"as good a one as you know how."

"But," said the young blacksmith, who had already considered hammers, and had arrived at some notion of what a hammer ought to be, and had a proper contempt for cheapness in all its forms, "perhaps you don't want to pay for as good a hammer as I can make."

"Yes I do; I want a good hammer." And so David Maydole made a good hammer that perfectly satisfied the carpenter. The next day the man's five companions came, each of them wanting just such a hammer, and when they were done the employer came and ordered two more. Next the store-keeper of the village ordered two dozen, which were bought by a New York tool merchant, who left standing orders for as many such hammers as David Maydole could make. And from that day to this he has gone on making hammers, until now he has 115 men at work. He has never pushed, he has never borrowed, he has never tried to compete with others in price, because other men had done so. His only care has been to make a perfect

hammer, to make as many such as people wanted and no more, and to sell them at a fair price.

"LITTLE CHARLEY'S CHAPEL."

ONE of the speakers at the Sunday-school anniversary held last month in Exeter Hall, London, told this incident illustrative of the faith and love of Christian childhood.

I heard of a minister who went to preach somewhere in the North, and he was directed to tell the driver when he got to the station to drive him to "Ebenezer" Chapel. He acted upon these instructions. When the driver, who was not like a London "cabby," only to be guided by the names of public-houses, but who was a quiet, civil old fellow, whose kindness to his horse marked him as a good sort, turned to his "fare," and said, "Ebenezer? O, you mean Little Charley's Chapel, don't you?" "Little Charley's Chapel; no, I mean Ebenezer." "Yes; we old folks know it as Little Charley's Chapel," he said. "Why do you call it Little Charley's Chapel? Was it because the honorable member for Salford laid the foundation stone?" "No, but little Charley laid the foundation stone. The fact is, sir, a few years ago we wanted a new chapel, and we thought a good deal about how the money must be raised, but times were very bad, and the people were very poor, and labor and materials were very dear, so we resolved to give it up. But a day or two after the meeting, a little boy, about nine years old, came to the minister's door and rang the bell.

"The minister came out himself, and found the little fellow, with his face all flushed, and the perspiration

standing on his forehead, and his little toy wheelbarrow, in which there were six new bricks. He had wheeled his load up a long steep hill, and was so out of breath that he could hardly speak. At last he found breath to answer the minister's wondering question, 'Well, Charley, what is it?' 'O, please, sir,' said Charley, 'I heard you wanted a new chapel, and were thinking of giving it up; so I begged these few bricks from some builders who were building a house down the village, and I thought they would do to begin with.' The minister called the committee together again, and Charley's little barrowful of bricks was brought before them. The child's enthusiasm was contagious, and the desponding committee plucked up heart; and little Charley laid the first stone of the big chapel, which will hold 1,000 people, and cost £6,000, and now it is out of debt."

"And what has become of little Charley?"

* The old man's voice grew husky: "If you'd let me pull up at the church-yard, sir, I'll show you Charley's grave. There's a many graves there, but you may always tell Charley's by the bright fresh flowers. He was the pot of the Sunday School, and the children never let a day go by without putting fresh flowers on his grave. He used to live close by the school, and he died the very day the last pound of the chapel debt was paid. It was a summer's day, and he made them set his window open, that he might hear the children sing. He would have them sing a happy tune, and he died trying to join them in it from his little bed; but though he could hardly begin the hymn on earth, we all believe he finished it in heaven."

SERVING A GOOD MASTER.

“REMEMBER, I must have the bridle on Monday,” said Mr. Harcourt, as he turned to leave a shop where he had been giving some orders about his harness.

“I beg your pardon, sir,” said Mr. Benson, the master, coming forward; “but it will not be possible to get it done by Monday.”

“Not possible,” returned Mr. Harcourt, stopping short. “What nonsense! Why, there is all to-morrow.”

“To-morrow is Sabbath, sir,” returned the shopman firmly, but respectfully.

“Well, what of that?”

“We do not work on Sabbath, sir.”

“Then I shall go to those who do. You can put the bridle in the carriage,” added Mr. Harcourt, turning to the man to whom he had given the order.

“We can get it done by Tuesday, sir, without fail,” interposed Mr. Benson.

“Tuesday will be too late,” returned Mr. Harcourt, and then, without another word, he stepped out of the shop, bidding his groom take the bridle from the man, got into his phaeton and drove off, muttering to himself: “The old humbug! I will make him repent his folly.”

Mr. Benson had lost Mr. Harcourt’s custom—he felt sure of that. He was a new customer, just recommended to him by a person whom he greatly desired to oblige, and he was a man who knew what good work was, and who did not mind what he paid for it, and paid promptly, too; and just now such employment would have been invaluable to Mr. Benson.

It was some few hours after Mr. Harcourt had left the

shop that Mr. Wilcox, a clever, pushing saddler, who lived in an adjoining street, came bustling in.

• “Well, Benson,” said he, as he rubbed his hands one over the other, with uncommon glee, “you have been and done it, that is all.”

“Done what?” inquired Benson, as he looked up quickly from his work, making a good guess, however, as to his visitor’s meaning.

“Knocked down your luck with one hand, and give it to me with the other.”

“You mean, I suppose, that Mr. Harcourt drove on from my shop to yours.”

“Exactly; and I thought the least I could do was to come and thank you, and tell you how happy I should be to work for as many more as you like to send.”

“I need not tell you I shall not send you those that I can keep,” replied Mr. Benson, trying hard not to show that he was annoyed; “but, God helping me, I will never go against my conscience—not for any man nor any money.”

“Well, every one to his taste. I know my own advantage a little too well to refuse good work when it is offered.”

“Has it ever struck you,” asked Benson, “that a man may be out of his calculations when he thinks himself wiser than his Maker?”

“But,” returned Wilcox, “if a man wants to get on in this world, he must be ready to risk something to carry his points.”

“I think he risks more who goes against God’s laws than he who conforms to them,” said Benson. “Keep God’s command, and never fear but he will keep you. It is a safe line of action, and I am not afraid to hold it.”

"And from this you would argue," said Wilcox, "that I am to throw up Mr. Harcourt's order, affront him; and lose a first-rate customer; thank you, I am not such a fool."

"I am not arguing on the point," returned Benson. "You asked me why I did not undertake Mr. Harcourt's order, and I have told you. I will not pretend to deny to you that I was very much put out at losing Mr. Harcourt's connection. But I have no choice in the matter; I have but one course before me—to obey God. He that serves him serves a good Master. He never forgets the payment; and if at times a man seems to wait for his wages, it is only that the money is being put out to better interest than we can get here. What is good for a man to have will be made up to him some time or other. As for what is not good for him to have, why, he is better without it; there is no doubt about that."

But as Wilcox returned to his own house he had considerable doubts on the point, and thought his neighbor a great fool, and himself a very clever man. The Sabbath was spent in executing Mr. Harcourt's order; the harness was sent home on the Monday; the money was promptly paid; a fresh order was given, and Wilcox again congratulated himself on his good luck.

It was some weeks after, and they had been weeks of great trouble to Benson, that another carriage stopped at the door of his shop, a well appointed dark-green brougham, drawn by a comfortable, sleek-looking horse, and driven by a coachman whose well-to-do appearance was quite in keeping with that of the equipage.

While Benson was wondering who his visitor might be, the carriage door opened quickly, and a fine-looking man, in military attire, got out, and walked in to the shop, with an air of decision as if he was accustomed to give his orders

and be promptly obeyed. Glancing around the shop with an eye bright with lurking humor, he took in its arrangements and made his own estimate of the character of its possessor.

"So," he said, turning to Benson, "you are the impudent fellow who will not work on a Sabbath?"

Fortunately for himself, Benson was a good physiognomist. Looking up at his visitor, he felt sure that, however abrupt the words might sound, no offence was intended; and so, with a smile, he answered, respectfully,

"I do not work on Sabbath, sir; but I hope it does not follow, as a necessary consequence, that I am wanting in respect to my employers."

"Yes, it does, man; at least so my friend Harcourt says. He gives you but a bad character."

"I am sorry for it, sir," began Benson; but his visitor cut him short.

"Actually refused his order, and told him you would not do his work; do not you call that impertinence?"

"I had no choice, sir."

"Yes, you had. You were free to choose between serving God and pleasing man, and you made your choice; and it is in consequence of that determination that I am here to-day. I am General Downing. I have been looking out for some time past for a man on whom I could fully rely to execute a large government order. The moment I heard Mr. Harcourt's story of you, I made up my mind you should have the work if you could take it; for I felt sure that the man who could serve God so fearlessly, would be the man who would best do his duty by his neighbor."

And as the General proceeded to detail to Benson the nature of the order he proposed to give him, Benson saw, in a moment that such a prospect of well-doing was opened

to him as he had never yet had since he went into business. Nor was he mistaken—that order laid the foundation of Benson's present prosperity. People envy him his good luck, but he knows better than to call his altered fortunes by that name: and as he looks on the future with the consciousness that, if all goes well, provision is now made for his old age, he thankfully acknowledges from whose hand the blessing comes, and that he has made experience for himself of the truth of the old proverb, "He that serves God serves a good Master."

And so will it ever be, though it may not be always shown to us by the increase of worldly prosperity. If a man determines to serve God for the sake of bettering his earthly prospects, he is not serving God at all; he is only serving himself and his own interests. Let not such a man deceive himself. God is not mocked. He who reads the inmost thoughts of the heart, will laugh to scorn the pitiful imitation of godliness.

- But let a man make up his mind bravely and honestly to seek first the kingdom of God, not counting the price he must pay for it, content to forego present prospects of gain and worldly success, so long only as he may win heaven; this man will, for the most part, find that even in this world he has made a wise choice. God not only can, but does, make up to his servants for all they have given up for his sake, and hardly an instance could be pointed out of a man who has sincerely obeyed God's commands, regardless of consequences that might ensue to himself, but sooner or later the sacrifice has come in blessings, and he has found his loss repaid ten, thirty, aye, and a hundred-fold.—*Christian Weekly*.



"THOU GOD SEEST ME."

IT was a large black-walnut frame, and it hung almost from the ceiling in the little bed-room. It was a mother's work, the putting of it there. She was always doing something quietly for the good of her boys. She never found much fault with them; but she was always dropping a word of advice, and putting things in their way—things that pleased them, that developed the better qualities of their nature, and that had a lesson on the face of them.

There was the nail with its red head, and the large red cord, and then two fine tassels hanging down. There was no chromo or oil painting by the old masters within the frame, but only the large illuminated letters—the great T and G and S and M, with flourishes around each of them, and then the smaller letters to make up the four words of the motto. And when H. opened his eyes early in the long summer mornings, it was the first thing he looked at. There it had hung all the night long, and there it seemed to welcome his first look—it was a sort of morning visitor, and received all his attention, for there was nothing else on the wall worth his notice. He counted the letters a thousand times, read them forward and read them backward, formed new combinations of them, and they spelled out many other and funny names; but there was one way they read best, and that was as they were printed on the tablet, "THOU GOD SEEST ME."

It was only the summer before that his mother bought it, "Because," she said, "it was so appropriate for H.'s room." "Not," she added, "that I thought him more liable to forget God than his brothers, but it was from that text our pastor—who is now in heaven—preached the day H. was baptised." That was why she purchased it the

moment she saw it, and had it hanging in H.'s room to surprise him when he returned from school, and she gave it to him as *his own*. H. liked it, too, and took a glance at it as he lay down at night, and said the prayer, "Our Father which art in heaven;" but it was when he awoke in the morning that he studied it most attentively. And now for more than six years he had closed his eyes and opened them as often upon the same words, and there it hung as attractive as ever.

One evening his father came home from the city. The family were all around the table at tea, when he looked across and said: "H., I have got a situation for you." H. was delighted. It was of little consequence then what sort, the fact was enough. A situation in a banking house: what will the other boys think? To begin next Monday. He could scarcely wait so long. And then there was preparation and bustling and packing up his trunk and all that. His mother said he had better put in that motto; but H. was too careful of it, and wanted to wait till he should be settled. He could get it at any time, he thought.

Monday morning came at last, and H. was off to the city with his father. What a sight! As far as the eye could reach were houses, long chimneys, spires. He had never been in the city or seen the like before. The streets were crowded. He was bewildered with the buildings, the dazzling windows and the ceaseless din of busy traffic. He scarcely knew himself. He felt that he was but "a drop in a bucket" in the endless crowd.

"This is the place," said his father, and they turned in at a wide door, and stood within a large counting-house. There were a dozen other men and boys, and H. soon found his place among them; but could think of nothing, only gaze in bewilderment at the magnificence on which he had opened his eyes so suddenly.

His father must return by the evening train. He took him aside and said: "My son, be obedient, obliging, civil and respectful, be attentive to business, be honest, be trustworthy. You are now to form a character for life, and perhaps a fortune too. Above all, remember your motto, 'THOU GOD SEEST ME.'"

H. promised he would, and kept his pledge, for it was impossible for him to forget it, then at least. He followed as closely as possible his father's advice, and gained the esteem of his equals and the confidence of superiors. He rose step by step, till he occupied one of the most responsible positions in the place.


But he was not to live always a stranger to temptation. His position and reputation put the enemy in his way. At any moment he might have laid his hands on hundreds of thousands of dollars and walked away with it. At first he reproached himself for permitting the thought of such covetousness to enter his mind; but the temptation grew stronger and he grew weaker. The plans by which the wicked act could be carried out opened before him. They formed themselves without any mental effort. The Tempter of Souls was after him. Perhaps he was too young in years to be placed in a position of such responsibility.

Gradually the project became the tyrant, and he submitted as its slave. Everything arranged itself with the nicest harmony and precision. The evening was set; the money counted. He could lay his hand on it in a moment. Through all the previous day he was fearfully tried. He appeared happy and pleasant, but then there would rise the uncalled-for sigh. At last the fearful moment came. All the others had left. He remained under pretence of finishing some business. He walked to the vault and swung open the heavy door. As he reached out his hand to grasp the money, it fell from his fingers as if it had


been a bar of red-hot iron. He trembled as in a convulsion; and then the burning thought flashed across his terribly excited mind, "THOU GOD SEEST ME." He felt the eye of God gazing upon him, and, with reproving glance, warning him of his guilt. He fell upon the floor and groaned aloud. The money he had dropped seemed to answer, "Thou God seest him." He cried out aloud, "O God of my mother, save me from this crime!"

And God did save him. In uttering the prayer he had passed the crisis. He replaced the package of money, closed the vault, and repaired at once to the house of the president of the bank, related to him all that had transpired, and begged to be dismissed from his position. The president was a good and wise man, and promised that he would keep the matter a secret, assured him that his confidence in him was not destroyed, and that he would keep him in his place. But he advised him to retire for a month from the bank to recover his shattered energies and to reflect upon the past, and prepare himself for the future. At the end of that time he could resume his duties as if nothing had taken place. He came back with a deep sense of his own weakness, but with a firmer reliance upon the grace of God as his only true safeguard, and with a more abiding sense than ever of the great truth, "Thou God seest me."

It is many years since this occurred. It is a lesson from the life of an experienced banker; but with some modifications, it is a history of the temptations that beset scores of boys and young men in city life. May the result be also the history of every one that is tempted to take money that is not his own.—*Observer.*



THE LUCKY LOAF.

 ONE evening a poor man and his son, a little boy, sat by the wayside near the gate of an old town in Germany. The father took out a loaf of bread which he had bought in the town, and broke it and gave half to his boy. "Not so, father," said the boy; "I shall not eat until after you. You have been working hard all day, for small wages, to support me, and you must be very hungry; I shall wait till you are done."

"You speak kindly, my son," replied the pleased father; "your love to me does me more good than my food; and those eyes of yours remind me of your dear mother, who has left us, and who told you to love me as she used to do; and, indeed, my boy, you have been a great strength and comfort to me; but now that I have eaten the first morsel to please you, it is your turn to eat."

"Thank you, father, but break this piece in two, and take you a little more, for you see the loaf is not large, and you require much more than I do."

"I shall divide the loaf for you, my boy, but eat it I shall not. I have abundance; and let us thank God for his great goodness in giving us food, and in giving us what is better still—cheerful and contented hearts. He who gave us the living Bread from heaven to nourish our immortal souls, how shall he not give us all other food that is necessary to support our mortal bodies?"

The father and son thanked God, and then began to cut the loaf in pieces, to begin their frugal meal. But as they cut one portion of the loaf there fell out several large pieces of gold of great value. The little boy gave a shout of joy, and was springing forward to grasp the unexpected treasure, when he was pulled back by his father. "My son,

my son!" he cried; "do not touch that money; it is not ours."

"But whose is it, father, if it is not ours?"

"I know not, as yet, to whom it belongs; but probably it was put there by the baker through some mistake. We must inquire. Run."

"But, father," interrupted the boy, "you are poor and needy, and have bought the loaf, and the baker may tell a lie, and—"

"I will not listen to you, my boy. I bought the loaf, but I did not buy the gold in it. If the baker sold it to me in ignorance, I shall not be so dishonest as to take advantage of him. Remember Him who told us to do to others as we would have others do to us. The baker may possibly cheat us. I am poor, indeed, but that is no sin. If we share the poverty of Jesus, God's own Son, O, let us share also his godness and his trust in God! We may never be rich, but we may always be honest. We may die of starvation, but God's will be done should we die in doing it! Yes my boy, trust God, and walk in his ways and you shall never be put to shame. Now, run to the baker, and bring him here, and I shall watch the gold until he

So the boy ran for the baker.

"Brother workman," said the old man, "you have made some error, and almost lost your money;" and he then showed the baker the gold, and told him how it had been found.

"Is it thine?" asked the father; "if it is, take it away."


"My father, baker, is very poor, and—"

"Silence my child; put me not to shame by thy complaints. I am glad we have saved this man from losing his money."

The baker had been gazing alternately upon the honest father and the eager boy, and upon the gold which lay glittering upon the green turf: "Thou art, indeed, an honest fellow," said the baker; "and my neighbor, David, the flax-dresser, told but the truth when he said thou wert the honestest man in our town.

"Now I shall tell thee about the gold: A stranger came to my shop a few days ago, and gave me that loaf, and told me to sell it cheaply, or give it away to the honestest poor man whom I knew in the city. I told David to send thee as a customer this morning. As thou wouldst not have the loaf for nothing, I sold it to thee, as thou knowest, for the last pence in thy purse, and the loaf with all its treasure—and certes, it is not small—is thine; and God grant thee a blessing with it." The poor father bent his head to the ground, while the tears fell from his eyes. His boy ran and put his hands about his neck, and said, "I shall always, like you, my father, trust God and do what is right; for I am sure it will never put us to shame."—*Little Lessons with Great Meanings.*

THE BIBLE IN MY TRUNK.

HE conversation at the tea-table turned upon the propriety of praying before other persons, and some contended it was pharisaical to kneel down and say your prayers while others were in the room. A minister, who was present, related the following anecdote:

"When I was a young man," said he, "I was a clerk at Boston. Two of my room-mates at my boarding-house were also clerks, about my own age, which was eighteen. The first Sabbath morning during the three or four hours that elapsed from getting up to bell-ringing for church, I felt a secret desire to get a Bible which my mother had

given me out of my trunk, and read in it ; but I was afraid to do so before my mess-mates, who were reading miscellaneous books. At last my conscience got the mastery, and I rose up and went to my trunk. I had half-raised it, when the thought occurred to me that it might look like over-sanctity and pharisaical, so I shut my trunk and returned to the window. For twenty minutes I was miserably at ease ; I felt I was doing wrong ; I started a second time for my trunk, and had my hand on my little Bible, when the fear of being laughed at conquered the better emotion, and I again dropped the top of the trunk. As I turned away from it, one of my room-mates, who observed my irresolute movements, said laughingly,

“ ‘ I say what’s the matter ? You seem as restless as a weathercock ! ’

“ I replied by laughing in my turn ; and then conceiving the truth to be the best, frankly told them what was the matter. To my surprise and delight, they both spoke up, and averred that they had Bibles in their trunks, and both had been secretly wishing to read in them, but were *afraid* to take them out lest I should laugh at them. ‘ Then,’ said I, ‘ Let us agree to read them every Sabbath, and we shall have the laugh on our side.’

“ To this there was a hearty response, and the next moment the three Bibles were out ; and I assure you we felt happier all that day, for reading in them in the morning.

“ The following Sabbath, about ten o’clock, while we were reading our chapters, two of our fellow-boarders from another room came in. When they saw how we were engaged, they stared, and then exclaimed :

“ ‘ What is all this ? A conventicle ! ’

“ In reply, I stated exactly how the matter stood ; my struggle to get my Bible from my trunk, and how we

three, having found we had all been afraid of each other without cause, had now agreed to read every Sabbath. 'Not a bad idea,' answered one of them. 'You have more courage than I have. I have a Bible too, but have not looked into it since I have been in Boston. But I will read it after this, since you've broken the ice.'

"The other then asked one of us to read aloud, and both sat and listened quietly till the bell rang out for church.

"That evening, we three in the same room agreed to have a chapter read every night, by one or the other of us, at nine o'clock, and we religiously adhered to our purpose.

"A few evenings after this resolution, four or five of the boarders (for there were sixteen clerks boarding in the house) happened to be in our room talking, when the nine o'clock bell rang. One of my room-mates looking at me opened the Bible. The others looked inquiringly. I then explained our custom.

"'We'll all stay and listen,' they said, almost unanimously.

"The result was, that without an exception, every one of the sixteen clerks spent his Sabbath morning in reading the Bible; and the moral effect upon our household was of the highest character. I relate this incident," continued the minister, "to show what influence one person, even a youth, may exert for good or evil. No man should ever be afraid to do his duty. A hundred hearts may throb to act right, that only await a leader. I forgot to add, that we were all called the 'Bible Clerks.' All these youths are now useful and Christian men, and more than one is laboring in the ministry."—*Church and State.*

AN INFIDEL'S STORY.

FOR many years I had been a follower of strange gods, and a lover of this world and its vanities.

Although not what the world calls a bad man, I was self-righteous, and thought I had religion enough of my own that was better than the Bible; I did not believe in the devil or hell. I believed that a God had created man. He was bound to save him. I knew I did not serve Him, did not know him, did not obey Him. I did not believe in the entire divinity of Jesus Christ, and thought that all Trinitarians were idolaters. You know what my early instructions were; they lay deep in my heart, though they had been buried from sight or thought by pride, and sin, and the world. Prayer was forgotten, the house of God was neglected, and worldly morality was the tree which brought forth its now deceptive fruit. So I lived—so I would have died, had it not been that God remembers his promises to his loving children. Now and then better thoughts, and doubts, and fears, would spring up in my mind, which, however, were soon stifled.

As time rolled on, God blessed me with children. As our boy grew up, our mutual love for him made us anxious about his welfare and future career. From time to time intelligence beamed from him. His mind turned over the little he had learned of God in his nightly prayers, taught him by us, from habit and superstition, more than any conscientious feelings.

His questions often puzzled me; and the sweet and earnest manner in which he inquired of his poor, sinful father, to know more about his heavenly Father, and that “happy land, far, far away,” which his nurse had taught him, proved to me that God had given me a great blessing

in him. A feeble feeling of gratitude would steal up in my heart, and fill me with something like regret, and bring back the time, when I loved to hear about, and believed more about, that same "happy hand."

A greater distrust of myself and a greater sense of my inability to assure my boy of the truth of the faith contained in the simple prayers I had learned from my mother, with my brothers and sisters, gradually began to grow over me, and made me oftener think. Still I never went to Church—had not even a Bible in the house. What was I to teach my boy? Christ and Him crucified, or Infidelity? Or let him learn what he could from the Jesuits, in whose Church he had been baptized? Blessed be God! He, in His Sovereign will, chose for me! One of his little friends died; then another; then his Uncle. All these things made an impression on the boy. He rebelled against it; wanted to know "why God had done it?" "it was hard that God should just go and take his friends, he wished he would not do it." I of course had to explain the best I could.

One evening he was lying on the bed partly undressed—myself and my wife being seated at the fire. She had been telling me that T— had not been a good boy that day. All was quiet; when suddenly he broke out in a loud crying and sobbing, which surprised us. I went to him and asked him what was the matter?

"I don't want it there," father—I don't want it there," said the child.

"What, my child, what is it?"

"Why, father, I don't want the Angels to write down in God's book all the bad things I have done to-day. I don't want it there. I wish it could be wiped out," and his distress increased.

What could I do? I did not believe; but yet I had been taught the way: I had to console him, so I said:—

“Well, you need not cry; you can have it wiped out in a minute, if you want.”

“How, father, how?”

“Why, get down on your knees and ask God, for Christ’s sake, to wipe it out, and he will do it.”

I did not have to speak twice, he jumped out of bed, saying, “Father won’t you come and help me.”

Now came the trial. The boy’s distress was so great, and he pleaded so earnestly, that the big man, who had never bowed down before God in spirit and in truth, got down on his knees alongside of that dear boy, and asked God to wipe away his sins; and, perhaps, though my lips did not speak it, my heart included my own sins too. We then got up, and he laid down in his bed again.

In a few moments he said, “Father, are you sure it is all wiped out?”

Oh! how the acknowledgment grated through my unbelieving heart as the words came to my mouth: “Why, yes, my son, the Bible says, if you ask God from your heart, for Christ’s sake to do it, and if you are really sorry for what you have done, it shall all be blotted out.”

A smile of pleasure passed over his face as he quietly asked: “What did the Angel blot it out with? with a sponge?”

Again was my soul stirred within me as I answered: “No, but with the precious blood of Christ. ‘The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin.’”

The fountains had at last burst forth. They could not be checked, and my cold heart was melted within me. I felt like a poor, guilty sinner, and turning away said, “My dear wife, we must first find God, if we want to show Him

to our children. We cannot show them the way unless we know it ourselves."

- After a little the boy, with almost heaven looking out of his eyes, came from his bed, and leaning on my knee turned up his face to mine, and said, "Father, are you and mother sinners?"

"Why, yes, my son, we are."

"Why," said he, "have you not a Saviour? Why are you sinners? God don't love sinners; don't you love God?"

I answered as best I could, and in the silent hours of the night I bent in prayer over that dear boy, and prayed, "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief."

My wife being a Roman Catholic, would not pray with me over our dear boy, until, blessed again be God, the Lord's prayer was put into my heart, and we prayed it together, and prayed jointly for ourselves and our child. Our God heard our prayers and received us, as He always does those who seek Him with the whole heart, for He has said of such, "They shall surely find Me."

BOLDNESS FOR CHRIST.



ONE of Frederick the Great's best generals was Hans Joachim von Zieten. He was never ashamed of his faith. Once he declined an invitation to come to his royal master's table, because on that day he wished to present himself at the table of his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. It was sacrament day. The next time he appeared at the palace, the king, whose infidel tendencies were well known, made use of some profane expressions about the Holy Communion of the Lord's Supper; and the other guests laughed at the remark made on the occasion. Zieten shook his gray head solemnly, stood up,

saluted the king, and then said with a firm voice, "Your Majesty knows well that in war I have never feared any danger, and everywhere have boldly risked my life for you and my country. But there is One above us who is greater than you and me—greater than all men; He is the Saviour and Redeemer, who has also died for your Majesty, and has dearly bought us all with his own blood. This Holy One I can never allow to be mocked or insulted; for on Him repose my faith, my comfort, and my hope in life and death. In the power of this faith, your brave army has courageously fought and conquered. If your Majesty undermines this faith, you undermine at the same time the welfare of your State. I salute your Majesty." This open confession of his Saviour by Zieten made a powerful impression on the king. He felt he had been wrong in his attack on the faith of his general, and he was not ashamed to acknowledge it. He gave his hand to Zieten—his right hand, placing the other on the old man's shoulder—and said with emotion, "O, happy Zieten! How I wish I could also believe it! I have the greatest respect for *you*. This shall never happen again." The king then rose from the table, dismissed his other guests, but said to Zieten, "Come with me into my cabinet." What passed in that conference, with closed doors, between the great king and his *greater* general, no one has ever learned; but this we know: that the Lord's own words were verified to Zieten: "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven."

ACHAN'S TREASURE.

"**I** thought we should hear from you to-day!" said Mr. Spencer to Deacon Brownlow, as they walked home from the prayer-meeting together.

The church at Middle Corners had for some time been in an unsatisfactory state. There were very few new members taken in, a good many had moved away, and of those who remained very few seemed willing to take any active part in church work. The prayer-meeting rested on the shoulders of two or three, the Sunday School on two or three more. The Missionary and other collections amounted to little or nothing, and it was hard to raise money even for the pastor's salary and other necessary expenses.

But of late there had been a change. The week-day evening prayer-meetings began to be better attended by the members of the church, and some outsiders dropped in. People who had never been heard from before began to open their mouths, sometimes with a few words of exhortation or confession, sometimes with a verse of a hymn or text of Scripture, or perhaps only a request for prayer. The female prayer-meeting was revived again. On Sunday the pastor was not obliged to strain every nerve to keep the attention of his people, and then be mortified by wandering or closed eyes. No great results had yet appeared, but there was a change like that we perceive when days grow long in March. "The weather may seem as cold as ever, but as we say, "There is a spring feeling in the air."

It was the Friday before communion Sunday, and Mr. Spencer had been strengthened and comforted by the course things had taken at the preparatory service which was always held on Friday afternoon. The lecture-room was

uncomfortably crowded, but nobody complained. Hardly a church-member was absent. Mr. Spencer, according to his usual custom, delivered a short discourse, and then invited others to speak, and so many had availed themselves of the opportunity that it was nearly dark before the meeting broke up.

Deacon Brownlow alone, of all the officers and elders of the congregation, had not been heard from. He had sat out the meeting in silence, his eyes fixed on the walls or shaded with his hands. He had even seemed impatient as one rose after another, and looked at the door as if in a hurry to get away. Nevertheless he had lingered a little and joined Mr. Spencer in his walk homeward, but he seemed to have nothing to say till Mr. Spencer gently repeated his remark—

“I hoped we should hear from you this afternoon. A better time seems to be coming for us, but we must all be ready to coöperate with the gracious influence, and we looked to you specially as being our oldest acting deacon.”

“I know, I know!” said Deacon Brownlow hurriedly; “I suppose I ought to have spoken, but the fact is, Mr. Spencer, I don’t know what ails me. I seem to have no spiritual life at all. My prayers are lifeless, and my praises mere words. My heart will not rise, do what I will.”

“That is very sad!” said Mr. Spencer gravely. “What do you think is the reason?”

“The reason!” repeated Deacon Brownlow in a tone of some surprise.

“Yes, the reason. There must be a cause for such a state of things: and certainly it is very desirable to find and remove it. No Christian should sit down contented for a single day with such a spiritual condition as you describe; no, not for an hour!”

"Suppose he can't help it!" said the deacon rather shortly.

He has no right to conclude that he can't help it till he has tried."

"Well, I think one's feelings depend a good deal on one's state of health, don't you?"

"Sometimes, no doubt, but I think that same state of health gets loaded with more than its fair burden. But that matter is easily settled. Tell me, honestly, Brother Brownlow, do you feel this same coldness and indifference regarding worldly affairs. The sale of your wheat now, don't you care anything about that?"

"Of course I do, but—"

"But if your coldness and indifference were the results of ill-health, would it not apply to the wheat as much as the prayers?"

The deacon was silent.

"My brother!" said the pastor, stopping short and laying his hand on the deacon's arm, "are you sure there is nothing worse in the way than a state of health? Is there not some Achan's treasure, some goodly Babylonish garment hidden under the floor of the tent? Think it over, and see if there is not some unrepented sin, some unjust gain perhaps—"

But here the conversation received a singular interruption. They had stopped in front of a little gambrel-roofed red house, separated from the road by a board fence and a row of tall lilacs. A voice spoke from behind the bushes in sharp, distinct, though rather tremulous accents:

"Maybe it's the twenty-five dollars you didn't pay for them colts, deacon,"

"Hayday! what's that?" said the pastor. "Come out and show yourself, friend, and don't shout from behind the bushes in that way!"

"It's old Ma'am Rodgers!" said the deacon confusedly. "You'd better not let her get hold of you. She'll keep you all night."

"Oh, no I sha'n't!" said the old lady, appearing at the gate. "It wont take long to tell the story, Parson Spencer. Just before Mr. Rodgers died he sold a pair of colts to the deacon. The price was to be a hundred and twenty-five dollars, and they both made a note of the bargain. Well, that was only a week before Rodgers was taken with the fit he died of. But when I came to talk to the deacon, he stuck to it that the price was only a hundred dollars, and showed a receipt for a hundred, he said the old man had signed."

"So he did up at Stone's store, and I paid him the money."

"I know that just as well as you. He gave me the hundred when he came home: he had sense enough left to do that. When I asked him about it next day he said the deacon had paid it to him on account. But when I spoke to the deacon he declared that was all he agreed to pay. I couldn't find the note for some time, but I did at last, and it says a hundred and twenty-five; and I guess it's the odd twenty-five that sticks in the deacon's throat and keeps him from talking in meeting." And with a cackling laugh the old woman went into the house and shut the door.

"I declare!" said the deacon; "I do really think Mrs. Rodgers ought to be disciplined for her tongue."

"Did you really agree to pay a hundred and twenty-five?"

"I don't think I did!" answered the deacon. "I—I mislaid my note-book, and—"

"Brother Brownlow!" said the pastor gravely and sadly: "I am afraid *this* is the Babylonish garment: Look into it and see! Good night."

Deacon Brownlow was left to take his way home alone, which he did with very uncomfortable feelings. He was afraid Mr. Spencer was not the man for them. He was afraid he was a legalist, since he set such a value on good work. As for that old woman he'd have her up before the church—yes, and before the court too!

The deacon found Mr. York the tavern-keeper waiting to pay him some money, a circumstance which usually put him in a good humor, but somehow it failed this time. It was the same with his evening survey of the premises. All was in apple-pie order, farming tools under cover, cattle housed, sheep provided for, pigs fed. There was not a better farmer in the country than Deacon Brownlow. Asa, the hired man, was just leading the colts to water.

"Beauties, aint they?" said Asa. "How they grow."

"There won't be a better pair of three-year olds at the fair next fall!" said the deacon. "York's don't compare with them."

"You got the best of the bargain that time, didn't you?" said Asa. "Gave a hundred and twenty-five to old Rodgers, didn't you? The old man must have been half drunk to let'em go at that."

"I only paid a hundred!" said the deacon, but he turned away. His pleasure in the horses was gone.

"Didn't we have a precious meeting, pa?" said Miss Dolly Brownlow at supper. "I was telling grandma I wished for her all the time. I do believe we are going to have a real awakening."

"I don't!" answered the deacon shortly. "Spencer isn't the man. He thinks too much of good works. What we want is a spiritual preacher."

"I thought Mr. Spencer was very spiritual!"

"Of course, all the women do?" answered the deacon with a sneer. "He's so handsome!"

Miss Dolly was silenced, but presently began on a new subject.

"The ladies of the church stopped after meeting, to see what they would do for old Mrs. Rodgers. I'm afraid the old lady has pretty hard times. Mr. Brown is going to draw her a load of wood, and several others have promised things. I thought I might agree to let her have that little crock of butter."

Miss Dolly spoke rather timidly, as if she feared a rebuff. She got it.

"Then you may disagree again, you won't do no such a thing. It's all nonsense, and a regular imposition. Let her go to the poorhouse. It's good enough for her."

"You wouldn't like to have anybody say that of grandma!" said Miss Dolly with unwonted boldness. "Mrs. Rodgers has been a consistent church-member for fifty years, and I think it's a pity if the church can't take care of her now."

"Well, you aint going to give her any crocks* of butter out of this house," said the deacon tartly. "York will take every pound we make, at thirty cents, straight through. I'll be bound *he* don't give it away."

"He sent the old lady a ham and a pound of tea only last week, and he isn't a church-member either."

"Jedidiah, my son?" said the old lady, who had not spoken hitherto, "Jedidiah, I'm afraid you're sitting too close to the world."

The deacon felt the rare reproof. He said no more till supper was over. Somehow, the family had lately dropped the custom of evening prayer. The deacon, muttering something about business, betook himself to his room taking his newspaper with him. He read it through from end to end, but found it very stupid. Then he counted over the money he had just received from York, and locked

it up in his desk. Then he tried to calculate the interest on a note, but he could not make it come twice alike, and he wrote "twenty-five" when he meant "fifty," three times over.

He pushed it away with an angry exclamation, and opened his Bible, for he had not dropped his old custom of reading a chapter every night. Latterly he had taken to searching for promises, but he had not found any which seemed to apply to his case. Now he opened the book at random and read: "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear."

He threw down the book with an angry—yes, with an oath.

The deacon stopped, appalled at the sound of his own voice. When had such a word passed his lips? and against whom or what had he uttered it?

With a bound his mind went back to that evening forty long years before, when in the same church meeting he and Dolly Wilson stood up and asked for the prayers of the faithful. They had walked home together, and then he had solemnly promised to God, to his betrothed and himself, that he would never use another oath. And he had kept his promise hitherto. He had never transgressed till this evening, when he had cursed, WHAT?

It was as if a flash of lurid lightning had showed him how far he was wandering from the right way, and displayed the precipice over which he was hanging.

The deacon fell down on his knees, on his face, and with broken words and bitter tears, bewailed his own sinfulness, and begged for grace and forgiveness. He did not know how long he had been there, when somebody knocked

softly at the door. He rose and opened it. There stood Miss Dolly in her wrapper.

"Are you sick, pa? I thought I heard you groan."

"No, dear," answered the deacon gently, "I was out of sorts a good deal, but I'm better now; there, don't stay up in the cold, my daughter. Go to bed and pray for your poor old father."

Miss Dolly closed the door and retired, and the deacon went to his desk. He did not have to search for what he wanted, but put his hand on it the first thing. It was an old diary, two or three years old. The deacon opened to the right place directly, and found the note he wanted, though he had told himself a dozen times that he did not know where to lay his hands on it. Then he sat down and calculated the interest, compound interest, on twenty-five dollars for three years. He had no trouble in bringing it out right this time. Then he took out a clean, fifty-dollar greenback from the roll Mr. York had given him, and laid it in his pocket-book, and after another season of prayer he went to bed.

The next morning he went out to the barn, before breakfast as usual.

"Asa, I want you to get out the little wagon, and load up a barrel of them Spitzenbergs, and a side of the pork we killed yesterday, and if there are any beefsteaks left, you may put in a couple of them too."

"Into the wagon?" asked Asa staring.

"Of course. You wouldn't put 'em into the horse would you?"

Asa stared again. A joke was rare with the deacon now-a-days.

"What shall I do with the things?"

"Leave 'em in the wagon. I'll see to 'em."

"About that crock of butter, Dolly! It was the smallest I think you said," remarked the deacon at breakfast.

"Yes, father!" answered Dolly; "there are three two-gallon crocks, and one three, and the little brown one, which holds about three pounds."

"I guess we'll take the three-gallon crock, Dolly, that'll last the old lady all winter. I'm going up to pay her some money I owe her, and I'll take it along—and, Dolly, perhaps you'd better look out a pair of blankets, or a comforter, or something. I don't believe the old house is any too warm, these cold nights."

That night at meeting, the deacon's mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spake and praised God.

Are you suffering under a sense of spiritual desertion and dryness? Are your prayers lifeless and your works heartless, and your soul like the heath in the desert? Don't be in a hurry to impute it to your "state of health." Don't lay it to any arbitrary hiding of God's face. Search your heart and conscience. Look, as the deacon did, among your accounts and business papers, and see if there is not with you, even with you, buried very deep perhaps, some Achan's treasure, some goodly Babylonish garment. Look honestly and prayerfully, and ten to one you will find it. The smallest cherished or indulged sin is enough to spoil your comfort in the best meeting that ever was held.—By LUCY ELLEN GUERNSEY, in the *Illustrated Christian Weekly*.

THE END.

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